ADJUSTMENT LAYERS | Q&A | PHOTO EDITING | PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS

Free CD inside

Photoshop® creative

The magazine for Adobe® Photoshop® inspiration and advice

Inside

Get crafty with Photoshop
Plenty of expert guides to creating inspirational artwork

Create a composite
Arrange and blend separate photos into eye-catching art

Illuminated letter effect
Create a classical decorated manuscript

Understand histograms

Make accurate colour adjustments by tapping into the power of histograms

10-page special

Blending modes

The ultimate guide to what blending modes do and how they can improve your work

41 pages of creative tutorials inside

Get started with illustration

Learn how to use photos, sketches and custom shapes to produce eye-catching graphics

Free CD-ROM!

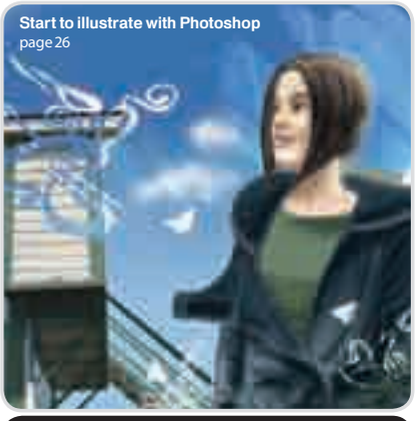
- 59 Inspirational stock photos
- 645 Artistic brushes
- 40 Custom shapes
- 15 Creative fonts

and much more

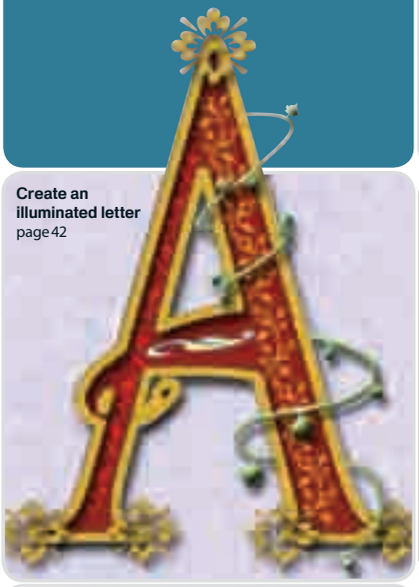
eMag

Welcome

A glimpse of what's in store this issue…



Start to illustrate with Photoshop
page 26



Create an illuminated letter
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Mission Statement

Here at *Photoshop Creative*, we promise to always give you the best selection of resources to help improve your Photoshop skills. Whether it's in-depth guides to tools and techniques, or showing how to create a work of digital art, we'll make sure the information you get is accurate and informative. We want you to get the optimum Photoshop experience, and have as much fun using the program as we do putting the magazine together.

Create cloud shapes
page 54

Create a photomontage page 64

It's easy to get a spot of tunnel vision when working in Photoshop. The program offers so much for the keen photo manipulator or digital artist, that you may forget it's also a powerful illustration tool. Don't believe us? Our tutorial section kicks off on page 26 with a great project for illustrating with Photoshop. In here you can discover some excellent methods for turning photos, sketches and custom shapes into good-looking illustrations. It doesn't matter how good or bad you are at drawing – there's a technique that can be adapted for your skill set.

In addition to illustration, we also have the usual concoction of inspirational ideas and practical guides. For starters, check out our feature (page 14) for an in-depth guide to blending modes and how they can help your work. Also discover how adjustment layers work on page 34 or see how the Hue/Saturation command can help improve images on page 50. Don't forget to try the great photomontage tutorial on page 64 or create your own decorated letter on page 42.

On a personal note, I'm going to be handing the *Photoshop Creative* reigns over to someone else from next issue. I have loved working on the magazine and will really miss seeing what you create. Best wishes to you all and take care!

Jo Cole **Editor**
jo.cole@imagine-publishing.co.uk

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On the CD
More free resources

Each issue we add loads of exciting resources to our disc. These pages tell you exactly what's on there!

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Exhibit
Reader showcase

This is the part of the magazine where we hand control over to you and showcase your creations

Creative Forum

This is the place where you get to share your Photoshop thoughts, troubles and triumphs with fellow readers

Oldie but goodie

I never write in to magazines, but really wanted to drop you a line with regard to your 'Quick photo process effects' feature in issue 19. I absolutely loved it and found so much to inspire me. I used to dabble in photography when I was a student (many years ago!) and then gave it up when I went to work. Now I'm retired and trying to learn Photoshop, so it was really nice to see some familiar effects. It was worth it just to find out about the Duotone mode. So far I've been using layers of colour and blending modes, but have never got it looking as it should. Now, thanks to your feature, I can get spot-on results every time! I've included an example of one of my creations – I tried to get a vintage texture using the Fibers filter but think I need a bit of practice!

Brian Shiverton

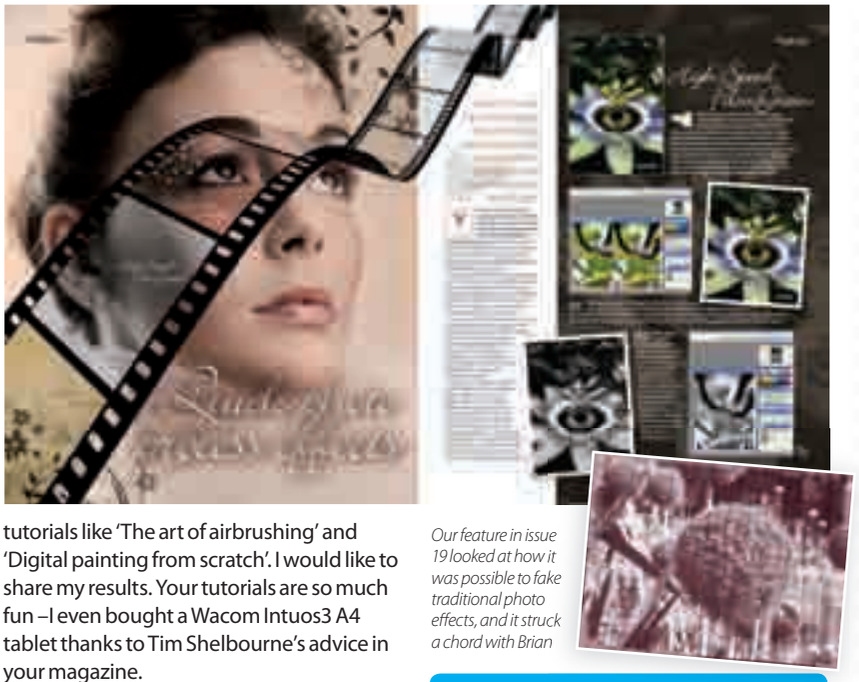
Thanks for sending us your work, Brian. There is a temptation to forget about non-digital effects when you use a computer to create artwork, but they can often be a fabulous source of inspiration. Look out for more tutorials on re-creating traditional photographic effects in future issues.

Driven to create

I always look forward to reading your magazine every month, especially the tutorials like 'The art of airbrushing' and 'Digital painting from scratch'. I would like to share my results. Your tutorials are so much fun –I even bought a Wacom Intuos3 A4 tablet thanks to Tim Shelbourne's advice in your magazine.

Hans Mooiman

Excellent work, Hans. We especially enjoyed the changes you made to both of the tutorials to really make them your own and something special. Be sure to keep us up to date with what you and your graphics tablet create!



Our feature in issue 19 looked at how it was possible to fake traditional photo effects, and it struck a chord with Brian

Hans has followed previous tutorials to create these lovely images

Back issues

Looking for your next fix of *Photoshop Creative*? Keep your eyes peeled at the end of March

I missed a few issues so went to buy them on your online shop, but was dismayed to find they were sold out. Not a problem, I thought. I'll get one of those DVDs. Not so – it only covers one of the issues I'm missing. Can you help?

Suzanne Trailse

Hello Suzanne. We can't do anything about individual issues that are sold out, but we do have another *Photoshop Creative Collection* in the pipeline. This brings together the very best content from issue nine upwards, bound in a lovely glossy format. Due to go on sale from the end of March, you can get a copy from WHSmith or the eShop at **www.imagineshop.co.uk**.

Volume 1 of the collection sold out, so make sure you snap up volume 2 quickly!

View from the forum

User: Tyrone
Topic: CS3
Who out there has tried the beta of Photoshop CS3? I've had a few problems with betas conflicting with installed software and wanted to see what it was like before risking it.

User: Jo
Topic: Re: CS3
I like it. Some of the new features are really impressive and do a lot to help your creativity flourish.

User: Cedric
Topic: CS3
I installed it and had no problems with the beta conflicting with the full version. The only problem I had was finding my CS2 serial number!

TALK TO US! | EMAIL US YOUR THOUGHTS TO PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

eMag

Creative hub

The latest news stories for the Photoshop community

What's hot this month

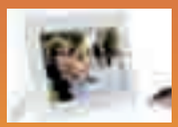
GET VISTA READY

With the arrival of Vista, those looking to upgrade don't just need to think about their PCs – all hardware will be affected. Kingston Technology's new DataTraveler ReadyFlash USB 2.0 Flash drive has been designed to support Microsoft Windows ReadyBoost technology, and with 2GB capacities is worth a look.

SEND MORE

A common problem for Photoshop users is getting art to others. FTP sites are useful but can be temperamental, and sending a CD is simply too slow. Pando Networks Inc lets email users send and receive files up to 1GB from their existing email accounts, and it's free! Check out **www.pando.com** for more details.

GALLERY: HOME



Turn your home into a gallery with the new Philips nine-inch PhotoFrame. Whatever your décor there's one to suit, with a contemporary or wood finish. Save money on getting your images printed, but display them proudly for all to see on this high-resolution screen.

TOP STORY: PHOTOSHOP AWARDS

Musician, Giorgos Pagomenos

Flying Cloud, Ted Grace

Hubble Bubble, Ciro Marchetti

Photoshop User awards top artists

There could only be a few winners – we find out who they are

You can't open a magazine or newspaper at the moment without reading about some award ceremony or another – the Oscars, the Brits and of course, the Photoshop User Awards.

Never heard of them? Well, they're well worth becoming acquainted with for next year. Run by the National Association of Photoshop Professionals (NAPP), the awards are aimed at users of the Adobe application from across the globe. And with more than 55,000 members in 106 countries, it's no surprise the NAPP is the world's largest graphics and digital imaging association.

Entrants compete for prizes in General Photoshop, Illustration and Retouching, among others. This is the second year the awards have been held and they are the only worldwide competition exclusively for Adobe Photoshop users.

"Picking the winners this year was incredibly difficult because there were literally hundreds of entries by extraordinarily talented Photoshop artists, photographers and designers," says Felix Nelson, judge and creative director for *Photoshop User* magazine. "The individual works we selected were the cream of the crop, and true celebrations of creative vision and innovation."

Winners include Ted Grace from California in the General Photoshop category, Brad Hicks in Illustration, Van Hughes for Retouching and Amy Robinson in the Student category. All the winning images are available for viewing at **www.photoshopuserawards.com/winners.php**.

The successful artists in each category will receive a special prize package, valued at over $2,500, and their winning images will appear in a future issue of *Photoshop User* magazine. For the overall winner, an assignment and an assistant in Rome awaits them!

If you want to find out more about how you can enter next year's awards, visit the Photoshop User website (**www.photoshopuserawards.com**).

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Adobe Photoshop A-Z

A special series working through the best features of Photoshop

F IS FOR FREEFORM PEN

Most Photoshop users are well versed in the use of the Pen tool to draw paths, but the Freeform tool is a lesser known and therefore lesser used option.

The Pen tool gives greater precision, while the Freeform Pen tool is more akin to drawing with a pencil on paper. Anchor points are added automatically as you draw, and although you don't determine where the points are positioned, you can adjust them once the path is complete.

Find the Freeform tool in the pull-out menu underneath the Pen tool.

Let there be light!

After months of waiting, Adobe releases the finished version of Lightroom

Twelve months after its debut as a public beta, Adobe is ready to take the training wheels off Lightroom and let us get our mitts on the finished version. Designed to enable pro photographers to import, manage and present large volumes of digital

Adobe Lightroom – a truly collaborative effort

photos, helping them spend more time behind the lens and less at the computer, the app is a great tool for the Photoshop artist too. Downloaded by half a million beta testers, Adobe is the first to admit Lightroom is a product of the efforts of testers as well as software developers: "Everything from image viewing to editing features was developed with the help of photographers. This was truly a collaborative effort and we extend our thanks to everyone who provided feedback to help us deliver a powerhouse photography tool," said John Loiacono, senior vice president, Creative Solutions Business Unit at Adobe. Lightroom includes functionality added since beta 4.1, with changes to the Library and Develop modules complementing improvements to the Slideshow, Print and Web components. New tools include a Hue, Saturation and Luminance adjustment tool for precise, intuitive edits. **www.adobe.com/uk**

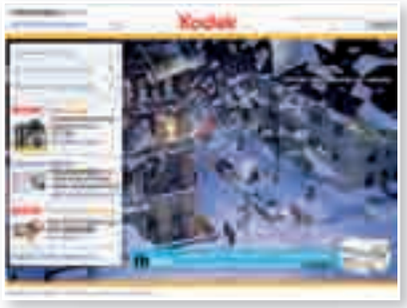
NEW PLUG-IN Kodak releases free Photoshop plug-in

A DIGITAL GEM

Plug-ins can be great tools. When they work, they can enhance the functionality of Photoshop and provide extra options. However, when they don't, they can slow down your computer as well as your workflow.

Getting plug-ins from trusted sources can mean you're more likely to get a tool you can be proud of. Kodak has introduced free image enhancement plug-ins for common photo problems.

The Digital Gem plug-in is aimed at automatically reducing image noise without sacrificing image detail or causing softening, while the Airbrush plug-in allows users to create an airbrush effect by smoothing areas without blurring or reducing fine detail. This tool is particularly useful for minimising the imperfections of skin while fully preserving details such as hair.



Get your plug-ins from a trusted source such as Kodak

The plug-ins are compatible with 8 or 16-bit digital photographs and with Adobe Photoshop and other programs that support Photoshop plug-ins, both Windows and Mac. Find out more at **www.kodak.co.uk.**

EXPOSURE

Get your work seen

AMATEUR ARTWORK
www.amateurartwork.com

The name might sound a little patronising, but the content isn't. Welcoming good quality artwork from those not considered pros, Amateur Artwork showcases photography, painting, drawing, sculpture, digital art and mixed media. Although not the best looking or easiest site to use, it's definitely up and coming.

ALL CREATIVE PORTFOLIOS
www.allcreativeportfolios.com

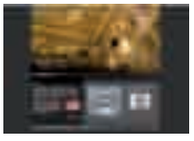
Getting your work out there and noticed can be a huge challenge, especially if you're working with a small budget. All Creative Portfolios offers packages to suit all pockets, plus resources to check out to ensure you're making the most of your portfolio. Even without professional experience, this site provides everything you need to get started.

Updates... THIS MONTH IN SHORT

New additions to the world of Photoshop

Sketch update

Akvis has announced an updated version of Sketch, a plug-in for converting photos into pencil sketches and watercolour drawings. The new version, 3.0, is available for both Windows and Mac, and includes the ability to save user presets for subsequent use. The new version is also compatible with Windows Vista. **www.akvis.com**



Imagenomic updates

With the arrival of Vista and the imminent arrival of CS3, we expect to be inundated with software and plug-ins, and the latest to join the race is Imagenomic. It has announced updated versions of Noiseware, Portraiture and Realgrain plug-ins. Free to existing customers, they're at **www.imagenomic.com/download.aspx**.

ALERT! | DON'T FORGET TO ENTER OUR READERS' CHALLENGE – SEE PAGE 98

Make a date

At a loose end? Here are the must-see events this month

4-6 APRIL
PHOTOSHOP WORLD
If you're State-side of the pond, why not check out the largest Photoshop educational event in the world? Photoshop World Conference & Expo is on in Boston from 4-6 April.

MARCH-APRIL
LOVEBYTES DIGITAL ARTS FESTIVAL
Lovebytes helps develop and promote new concepts and innovation in digital art and design through exhibitions, events and the commissioning of new interactive and digital artworks. **www.lovebytes.org.uk**

2-4 MARCH
GRAPHICS OF THE AMERICAS
Adobe product and workflow experts will share practical, hands-on demos of new tools and technologies, then walk you through how to apply them to your business at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

Two of the best… PLUG-IN SITES

The Plugin Site
www.thepluginsite.com

There are plenty of websites offering places to find new plug-ins. Whether they're freeware, shareware or paid-for, it can be hard to trawl through the thousands of products and it can be hit or miss whether the one you're downloading is even worth the time or money. The Plugin Site not only gives you somewhere to download but also allows you to read reviews, so you know what you're getting.

Alien Skin
www.alienskin.com

Power up your Photoshop with one of the best-known names in the plug-in world, Alien Skin. Constantly bringing out new products that push the creative boundaries, this should be your first stop when looking for a new addition to your toolkit. Two of our favourite Alien Skin plug-ins are Blow Up and Eye Candy.

BARGAIN PHOTOS

Buy that for a dollar!

Enjoy your pick of quality iStockphoto images for just $1

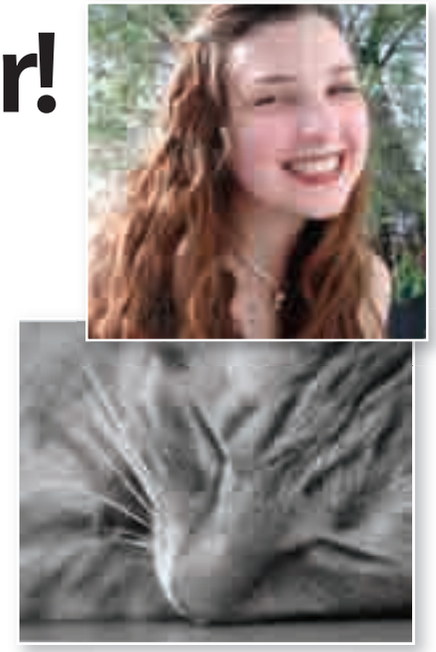
When iStockphoto first burst onto the scene, it caused a revolution. Here, for the first time, digital creatives could enjoy quality photos without having to pay a fortune for the privilege.

Now there are many affordable stock photo sites, but iStockphoto is still packed with intriguing features that make it a market leader. One that we particularly like is the Dollar Bin feature. With this, you can access a raft of photos all of which cost just – you guessed it – $1!

Accessing the images is very simple. Once logged in, you'll see a Dollar Bin link on the left-hand panel. Simply click this and you'll enter a new search area. From here you can click through all the results.

For a more honed searching experience, you could try searching for something specific by typing into the Search Within field, or open up some of the options on the left-hand panel. From here, you can set how to view your results, whether it's by size, title or rating; and you can also determine what type of images to accept. This feature is really good, because you can choose to only see horizontal or vertical images, for example, or only those that offer prints or extended licenses.

Although a few of the images in the Dollar Bin only go up to a medium size, there are ones available in large. When you find one you like, the downloading process is exactly the same, except you only use one credit! Try it for yourself today.



Just two of the photos available for just one credit!

TRAINING **Get to grips with this piece of kit**

Free Fluid Mask training

With the internet rife with rumours about the looming arrival of the latest version of Fluid Mask, Vertus – the company behind the software – has announced free online training.

Providing high quality training sessions five days a week (Monday to Friday), the training has been online for a few months, and it's proved so successful that the sessions are now split into beginner and intermediate stages. Each of these themed sessions will handle the core functionalities and tools in Fluid Mask.

And Vertus has had some great feedback: "It's rare to find a software company that provides personalised training on its products every day… I would highly recommend Fluid Mask and especially the training sessions with a live person… I wish some other companies would offer a similar service…."

Haven't got Fluid Mask yet? Don't worry – you can download the free trial version direct from **www.vertustech.com/fm_freetrial.htm**.

Vertus's training sessions have had excellent feedback

The team's wish list

Pure material delight…

Samsung NV3

A brand new camera to take all our source images with. Slim enough to slip into the tightest of jeans and stylish enough to carry everywhere, the new Samsung NV3s are a must-have.

We want it because…

The NV3 not only gives sharp pictures but includes an MP3 player. They're also available now in a stunning special edition Oriental Plant Lacquer – great for individuality and style. Retailing from £199 at **www.samsungcamera.co.uk**.

eMag

LUMINOSITY
Opacity 49%
PIN LIGHT
Opacity 72%
LINEAR BURN
Opacity 49%
HARDLIGHT
Opacity 21%
LIGHTEN
Opacity 52%
NORMAL
Opacity 100%

Understand blending modes

Blending modes are an incredibly powerful tool but they can take a while to get used to. **Adam Banks** gives you a no-nonsense guide to what they do and how they work

Blending modes have been a vital part of Photoshop ever since layers were introduced in version 3. By altering the way a layer affects what's below, they open up a vast range of creative possibilities. Their uses are most obvious when you're building up a layered composition, but you can also layer copies of the same image to produce custom effects. And blending modes can be used in other areas of Photoshop as well, for example with brushes.

When you add a layer to a Photoshop document, whatever's in it covers up what's in the layer(s) underneath. For example, when you use the Text tool to add type to a photo, the letters appear in a new layer. The pixels within the letters appear in the selected colour, covering up the image below. The pixels outside the letters are transparent, so the image shows through unchanged.

In the Layers palette, each layer has an Opacity control. By default it's set to 100%; reducing this allows more of the underlying image to show through. So, in the same example, your letters would become translucent, with the image partially visible through them. If you apply a layer style, for example to add a drop shadow to your type, this is also governed by the Opacity setting. To reduce the opacity of the lettering while leaving the drop shadow at full strength, you'd use the separate Fill Opacity setting.

All of this is true as long as the top layer's blending mode is Normal. By changing it to one of Photoshop's other blending modes – there are 22 to choose from in CS2! – you can make your layers combine in far more varied and interesting ways. Over the following pages you'll see exactly what this means in practice, and how you can use blending modes for great creative effects.

Normal/Dissolve

Let's review how Normal mode works. Whatever's in a layer covers up the layer(s) below, except in transparent areas. Transparent isn't the same as white: a white pixel overwrites underlying pixels just like any other pixel. Transparent pixels have no colour, indicated by a grey chequerboard pattern in Photoshop.

Pixels can also be partially transparent. This often happens when the layer content has a soft edge, for example when you cut out part of an image using the Marquee or Lasso tool with a Feather setting. The pixels around the edge graduate from solid to transparent. If a pixel is, say, 70% transparent, you'll see 70% of its colour and 30% of the underlying colour.

Decreasing a layer's opacity lets the underlying image show through non-transparent pixels too. At 70% opacity, you get 70% of the top layer's colour and 30% of the colour underneath.

The option after Normal is Dissolve. This deals with opacity and transparency in a different way. Instead of combining percentages of the layer's colour and the underlying colour, it allows either one or the other to show through at random.

Let's say you have a solid white pixel in the top layer, which is set to 70% opacity, and the underlying pixel is black. In Normal mode, that pixel will appear as 30% grey. In Dissolve mode, it'll be either black or white: there's a 70 per cent chance it'll be white, and 30 per cent chance it'll be black. Across a whole image, this creates a speckled effect.

Reducing a layer's Master Opacity (above) weakens both its content and any layer style, such as the drop shadow here. Reducing the Fill Opacity leaves the layer style intact

Going green

Use the Dissolve mode to create a speckled appearance

01 Adjust the opacity Reducing the Opacity setting of a layer allows the underlying image to show through. Here the white type looks too stark over the textured green background, so we're reducing the opacity to 60%. The background blends smoothly through the lettering.

02 Switch to Dissolve Dissolve mode renders reduced opacity in a different way. Instead of combining the colour values in the layer's pixels with those of the underlying image, it chooses randomly whether to keep the underlying colour of each pixel or overwrite it. This creates a speckled effect, which in this case gives the lettering an appropriate grassy texture.

03 Combine blending modes What if you now want to reduce the opacity of the speckles? Each layer can only have one blending mode. But you can get around this minor problem by grouping the layer. A layer group – even if it only contains one layer – has its own blending mode and opacity. We've set ours to Overlay, 75%.

Darken, Multiply, Color Burn, Linear Burn

Multiply is probably the most important blending mode – the equivalent of placing two pieces of positive film (photographic slides, for example) on top of each other on a lightbox. We'll use it as an example to take a closer look at how layers work.

Photoshop renders a layered image by looking at each pixel in turn, combining the colour of that pixel in the top layer (the 'blend colour') with the colour in the layer below (the 'base colour') to come up with the 'result colour'. These calculations accumulate through all layers. As we've seen, layer opacity is taken into account, but from now on we'll assume it's 100%.

In a 24-bit RGB colour image (the kind you work with in Photoshop), a pixel's colour is defined as amounts of red, green and blue light, each from 0 to 255. With all values at zero, you get black; all 255 gives white. Bright red is R=255, G=0, B=0; bright yellow is R=255, G=255, B=0, etc.

In Multiply mode, the blend colour is multiplied by the base colour and divided by 255 to give the result. If one of the layers is white, it'll have no effect on the other, as the colour values are multiplied by 255 then divided by 255 again. This means white is neutral for Multiply. If one layer is black, however, all colour values get multiplied by zero, so the result is always black.

Multiply is ideal for overlaying dark-coloured text or imagery onto a background. For example, if you are scanning in a line drawing done on white paper, Multiply is the mode you'd use to layer it onto a background texture in Photoshop. It's also the perfect mode for adding shadows.

Although it sounds similar, Darken works very differently. The base and blend values are compared, and whichever is darker (a lower number) is retained as the result colour. Let's say you have an image containing dark red lettering (a typical pixel might be R=100, G=25, B=25) on a pale yellow background (R=200, G=200, B=150), and you want to overlay this on a mid green paper texture (R=25, G=125, B=50). With Multiply, the red on the green would give R=10, G=12, B=5: almost black. To preserve the red colour, use Darken instead. The dark red's lower values overwrite the mid green, but the mid green overwrites the pale yellow. So you get to keep both the red lettering and the green background.

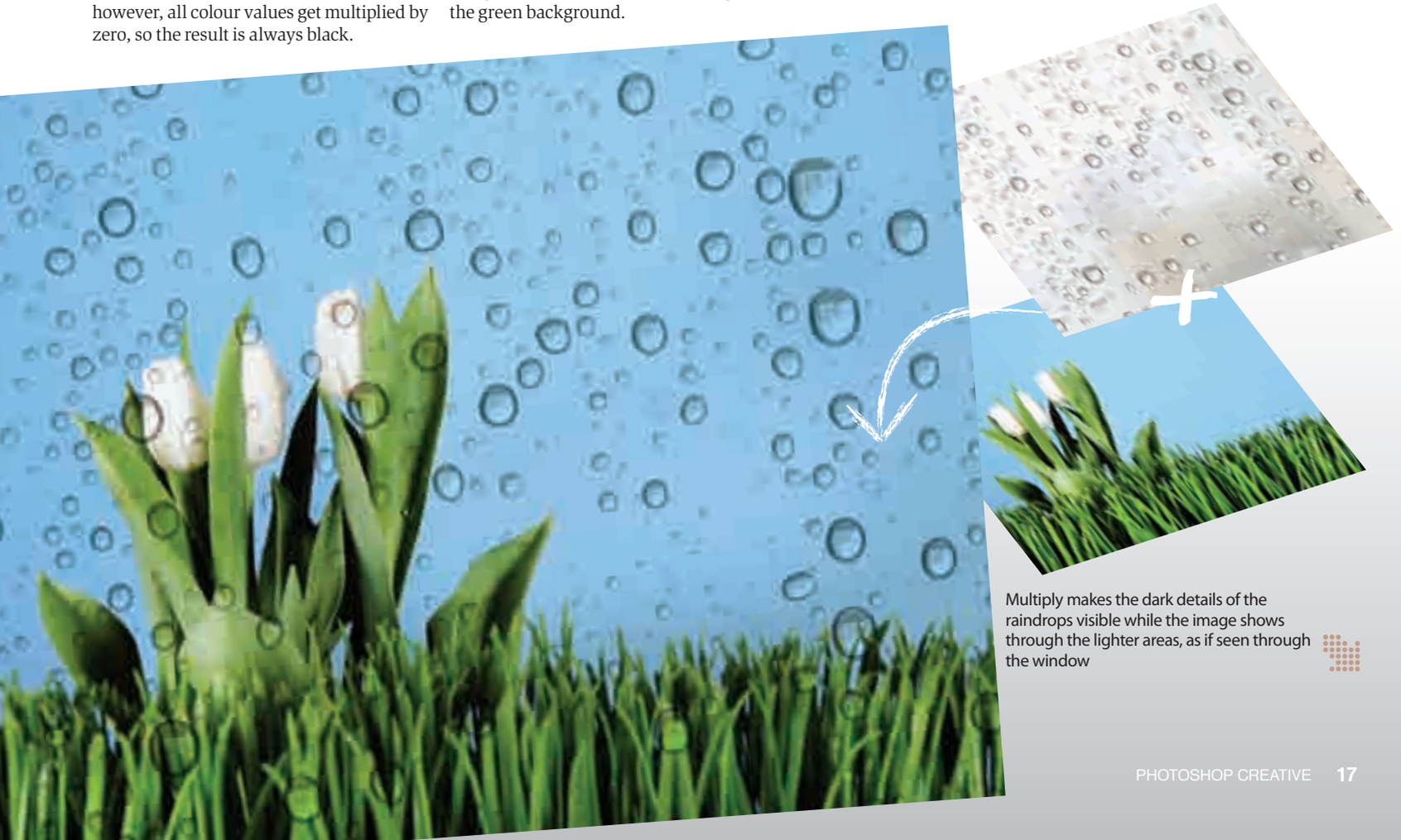
This can be useful, but watch out. While Multiply will always give a smooth blend, Darken can cause aliasing (visible pixel stepping) on edges and 'tearing' within colour transitions.

There are two more 'darkening' modes: Color Burn and Linear Burn. Like the Burn tool, these are based on the technique of restricting light while developing a photo to make the image darker. Both give a more intense result than Multiply, and Color Burn especially makes colours more saturated. Whenever you use Multiply, try these. You may need to reduce opacity to prevent the result getting too dark.

> "Multiply is probably the most important blending mode. It's the equivalent of placing two pieces of positive film on top of each other on a lightbox"

Lighten, Screen, Color Dodge, Linear Dodge

Next come the 'lightening' modes. Screen is the exact opposite of Multiply, and here's how it works. First, each colour value is subtracted from 255. This gives its inverse: black becomes white, white becomes black, and all colours in between change to their complements, in that weird way you



Multiply makes the dark details of the raindrops visible while the image shows through the lighter areas, as if seen through the window

get in photographic negatives. Remember, you don't see this, it's just the first stage of Photoshop's calculations. Next, the same process is used as for Multiply: the (inverted) blend and base colour values are multiplied together then divided by 255. Finally, the result is subtracted from 255 to invert the colours back to positive.

You can test this inverse process for yourself. Starting with two image layers, set the top one to Multiply and look at the result. Now invert the images by selecting each layer in turn and going to Select > Inverse. Flatten the result and then invert it back. You now have the same result as you'd get by using Screen on the original layers.

The difference between Multiply and Screen is similar to the difference between subtractive mixing, eg with paints, and additive mixing, like when you shine coloured lights onto a screen. The more paint colours you mix together, the darker and muddier your paint becomes. We've already seen how mixing red and green gets you towards black. But if you add red light to green light, you get yellow; add blue too, and the result is white. (See our feature on colour theory in issue ten.)

The rule is that Multiply makes dark stuff show up over what's beneath, while Screen makes light stuff show up. And just as white is neutral for Multiply, black is neutral for Screen. For example, to add a highlight you could make a new layer and use the Gradient tool to make a graduated tint from black to white – perhaps a radial gradient, with white at the centre, to create a round highlight, or a linear gradient for a sheen falling across the canvas. Set this layer's mode to Screen to make the white areas lighten the underlying artwork; the black areas are unaffected.

"Multiply makes dark stuff show up over what's beneath, while Screen makes light stuff show up. And just as white is neutral for Multiply, black is neutral for Screen"

As you'd guess, Lighten also does the opposite of Darken: whichever is lighter (a higher number), the base or blend colour, is retained as the result. Again, watch out for aliasing and tearing where the result flips over from the base to blend colour or vice versa, making a stepped edge.

As Color Dodge and Linear Dodge are the opposites of Color Burn and Linear Burn, you'd expect them to give a lighter and duller result. In fact, they exaggerate contrast in a similar way, while lightening instead of darkening. So you'd always use Dodge or Burn when you want a more intense result, whether lighter or darker, and the Color as opposed to Linear option when you want greater colour saturation.

Overlay, Soft Light, Hard Light, Vivid Light, Linear Light, Pin Light, Hard Mix

Now we come to the most complex and versatile blending modes – the 'balanced' modes. They let both light and dark areas of a layer affect what's below in various ways. For these modes, the neutral colour is mid grey (R = 128, G = 128, B = 128) – with one exception, as you'll see later.

Screen is the opposite of Multiply. Use it to layer lighter-coloured text or artwork onto images

The most straightforward one to grasp is Hard Light. This combines the concepts of Multiply/Screen with Lighten/Darken. If the blend colour is darker than mid grey, the values are multiplied; if lighter, they're screened. In other words, dark areas of the upper layer give the same result as if you'd used Multiply; light areas give the same result as Screen. In our example of using a black-to-white gradient to add highlights, with Hard Light it would add both highlights and shadows. In the result, white areas would be white, and black areas would be black, graduating through a mid point where areas of the image would remain unchanged.

It's common to use one image to add light and shade to another, but you don't usually want to white out the highlights and blacken the shadows totally. This is taken into account by the Overlay mode. Again, this applies Multiply to darker pixels and Screen to lighter ones, but it's the base colour that decides which mode is applied, not the blend colour. This preserves more of the underlying image's colour while adding light and shade.

Soft Light is more subtle. Any pure black or white in an Overlay or Hard Light layer will overwrite the underlying colour (unless you reduce the opacity), but with Soft Light it'll only create a degree of burning or dodging. Soft Light can be good for subtle shading, but watch out for unexpected colour shifts in the mid range.

The other balanced modes are variations on Hard Light, in that the blend colour decides what kind of blending is applied to each pixel; each uses different operations to produce the result. Pin Light applies Lighten where the blend colour is lighter than mid grey, so if the underlying image is already light it's left alone, but if it's dark it is lightened. Darken is applied where the blend colour is darker than mid grey, so if the image is already dark it's left alone, but if it's light it is darkened. This is the most subtle of the blending modes.

Linear Light is based on the Linear Burn and Dodge modes, and as you might expect, the result is similar to Hard Light but more intense. Vivid Light does the same with Color Burn and Dodge, giving exaggerated contrast and saturation.

"Linear Light is based on the Linear Burn and Dodge modes, and as you might expect, the result is similar to Hard Light but more intense"

You can also use the balanced blending modes to add tints by layering solid colour. Yellow with Overlay at 33% Opacity warms up this photo

A bit of a blur

Combine blurring and blending for a range of effects

01 **Duplicate the layer** You can combine blurring and blending for an endless range of image enhancement effects. Start by opening a photo and duplicating the background as a new layer. You will find the Duplicate Layer command in the contextual menu when you right/Ctrl-click a layer – among other places.

02 **Blur the copy** Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and enter a radius, in pixels. The greater the radius, the heavier the blur. For creative effects, think big! Smoothing out colour over a large area can help you turn an ordinary photograph into an image that looks as if it's been artificially tinted.

03 **Blend with the original** The blurred image may not look like anything at all, but the trick is to use a suitable blending mode to combine it with the original photo, which is still in your background layer underneath. You'll find most modes will leave dark detail clear while giving lighter areas a hazy glow. Here we've used Vivid Light for a really intense, 'hot' look.

Taking the idea further, Hard Mix combines Vivid Light with posterisation – reducing the image to a smaller palette of colours. This is achieved with a random 'dither' reminiscent of Dissolve. The effect is very harsh, but can be varied with the Fill Opacity setting: as you reduce it, you get the Vivid Light effect without the posterisation. If Hard Mix gives poor results with a specific image, try equalising it (Image > Adjustments > Equalize). For even more wacky colour effects, invert one or both layers.

The balanced modes are also useful for adjusting a single image. Starting with any flat image, duplicate the background to create an identical layer. Set its mode to Overlay to increase contrast smoothly. You can reduce the effect by adjusting the layers' opacity, or increase it by duplicating the layer again. Try other balanced modes too.

Another technique is to combine this kind of 'self-blending' with Gaussian Blur. Having duplicated your image as a new layer, go to Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur. Set the pixel radius to a small amount for a subtle soft-focus effect, or a large amount – say, 50 or 100 pixels – for more drama. Click OK. Set the new layer to Hard Light for a smooth softening effect, or use a non-balanced mode for more creative results.

Difference, Exclusion

You're probably least likely to use these two, but they're good to experiment with. They're both about inverting colours, giving a photo-negative effect. Difference subtracts the base from the blend colour or vice versa, depending which is lighter (has the higher value). Layering an image on itself in this one gives a black canvas.

Exclusion does much the same, but with lower contrast. It's interesting what happens to the mid range: layer an image on itself, and you get a result similar to Filter > Stylize > Solarize.

Try using these modes with inverted images. Layer a photo on itself, set the top layer to Difference, then invert it. This typically gives an intense, glowing image. Copy it again: now some areas are back to normal while others are psychedelic. Change one of the layers from Difference to Exclusion. Keep playing!

If you can't get the exact result you want when layering a texture over or under an image, invert the texture and set its layer to Difference or Exclusion – or indeed other modes. Also try the blur-and-self-blend technique with Difference and Exclusion. These modes tend to generate artificial outlines around certain colour transitions, and blurring exaggerates this, which can be interesting. Sometimes you may get to the point where you've built up two or more layers and the effect looks promising, but you want to try inverting the result. To do this, add a new layer, fill it with solid white and set it to Difference.

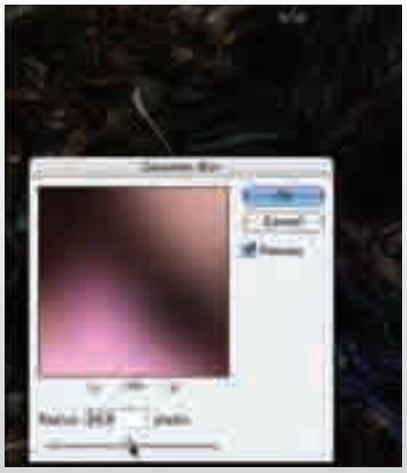
In this article we've talked about RGB images. If you work in a colour mode other than RGB, eg CMYK, blends will have different results. This is especially

If you're working in a colour mode other than RGB, blends may come out very differently. Look at how the colour mode alters this Difference layer

Dare to be different

Find out how the Difference mode can make a, er, difference…

01 Blur a duplicate Here's an example of a creative effect using Difference. Duplicate your image as a new layer. Set its blending mode to Difference: the result is plain black. Now go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Set a fairly large radius – we used 24 pixels – and click OK. Notice how a glowing outline of your image becomes visible.



02 Increase the blur Press Ctrl/Apple+F to repeat the Gaussian Blur. This adds more blur, but not in the same way as using a larger radius. Press Ctrl/Apple+F repeatedly until there's no more visible change. Add a blank layer, set this to Difference, and fill it with white: hit 'D' to set the background to white, select all, then Ctrl/Apple+Delete to fill.

03 Adjust levels This white layer inverts what's underneath, revealing a glowing white effect on your image. To make it bolder, go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels and click OK. In the Levels dialog box, drag the black slider to the right, to where the black bars above (representing the pixel values in the image) start to climb. Adjust the result by eye and click OK.

noticeable with Difference and Exclusion, because what constitutes the inverse of a colour depends on the colour mode. To see more possibilities with Difference and Exclusion, switch to CMYK. You'll be asked if you want to flatten the image; choose Don't Flatten, and you'll see the results of your layer blends change.

For best results, however, you should work in RGB, which also gives you the best colour space for all editing ops. If you need to save your work as CMYK for use in a desktop publishing workflow, convert it as the last step before output. Opt to flatten the image when changing modes, and save the result as a copy (usually in TIFF format). To carry on editing after this, use Undo or History to return to RGB, and save the layered image for future editing as an RGB Photoshop PSD file.

Hue, Saturation, Color, Luminosity

The last four blending modes are all about separating colour from lightness. For most purposes, colour and lightness are bound together: adding more R, G or B biases the colour that way, while increasing lightness. Blending images usually affects colour balance and light and shade.

What if you just want the light and shade of the upper layer affected, leaving the underlying colours the same? That's where the Luminosity blending mode comes in. This produces a result with the lightness of the blend colour and the hue and saturation of the base colour. To understand this, you'll need to get the hang of the Hue, Saturation, Lightness (HSL) colour model. The lightness of a pixel is just as it sounds: its place on the scale from black to white. Its hue tells you its colour. This is given as a position on a scale or wheel representing the visible spectrum, with red usually at zero. The saturation value tells you how strong that colour is; low saturation means the colour is close to grey, while maximum saturation means the colour is pure.

So, for example, a colour value of R=255, G=0, B=0 (bright red) can also be expressed as H=0, S=100%, L=100%.

"What if you just want the light and shade of the upper layer affected, leaving the underlying colours the same? That's where the Luminosity blending mode comes in"

This effect, reminiscent of faded paint on a wall, was created by layering the texture over the image using Luminosity at 75% opacity. It's a quick way to get art effects

R=0, G=128, B=0 (mid green) would be H=120, S=100%, L=50%. Layer the red on the green in Luminosity mode, and the green's H and S remain unchanged while the red's L wins out, giving H=120, S=100%, L=100%: bright green.

You can now guess the purpose of the Hue blending mode: this leaves the underlying image's saturation and lightness unchanged while applying the upper layer's hue. For example, if you layer an image on itself and invert the upper layer then set the upper layer to Hue, you'll get a version with negative colours but normal light and shade.

If you try this with non-identical images, you may get unsatisfactory colour results, especially if the added layer is more saturated than the original image. In this case you need to apply the blend colour's saturation as well as its hue. This is just what the Color blending mode does.

Lastly, Saturation applies only the blend colour's saturation, leaving the underlying colour and luminosity unchanged. This gives the underlying image a more intense or faded look, matching areas of greater or lesser saturation in the upper layer. There aren't many applications for this, but try layering a grungy texture over a photo in Saturation mode to give it a faded look, as if it's been damaged over time.

Layering this green texture over an image using the Hue blending mode results in the image taking on the green colour but not the texture

Blending modes

Can't remember what each mode looks like? Use this handy visual guide

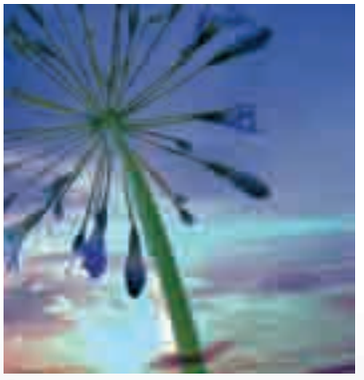
Now you've read through our feature, you should have a better understanding of what it is blending modes do and why it is they are so powerful when it comes to creating images. We've shown how each mode reacts differently when it comes in contact with different colours and given some examples of how this behaviour can be manipulated to give certain effects.

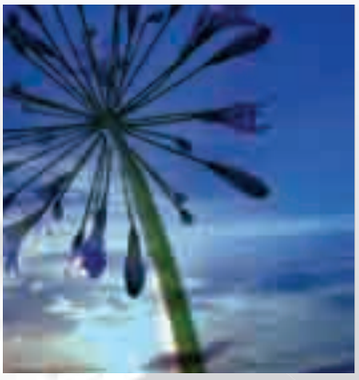
Now the theory is out of the way, we need to move onto the final stage of the feature – the visual guide to what all of the modes do. We've chosen a bright image to lay over a photo with darker tones, and used each mode at 100%. This should give you a good idea of how the modes make images react with each other and maybe even help you in deciding which ones to use in your own artwork.

While it helps to understand how the modes work, their behaviour will be determined by the images you're working on, so there's still plenty of room for experimenting!

Normal

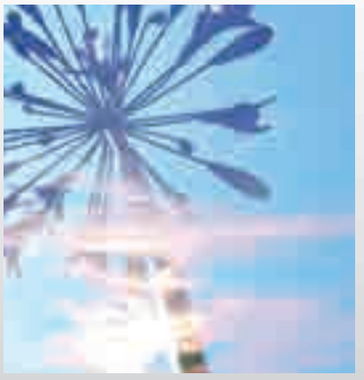
Dissolve


Darken


Multiply

Color Burn

Linear Burn


Lighten

Screen

Color Dodge

Linear Dodge

Overlay

Soft Light

Hard Light

Vivid Light

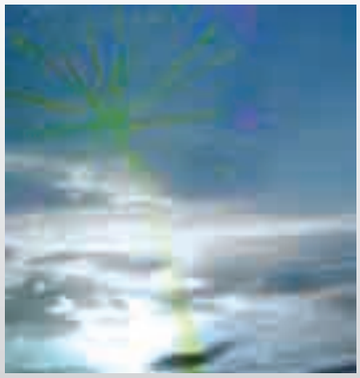
Linear Light

Pin Light

Hard Mix

Difference

Exclusion



Hue

Saturation

Color

Luminosity

eMag

tutorials

More fabulous tutorials to make you glad to be a Photoshop user! Whether it's image editing or digital art creation, there's something to tickle your fancy

Photoshop Creative_Issue 20

Big technique

Understand Hue/ Saturation 50

Gain more colour control over your images by getting to grips with this powerful yet thankfully intuitive command

Focus on...

We continue to work our way through the inbuilt tools of the Photoshop software and reveal how they can be used to create better artwork

Adjustment layers 34
Histogram 62

Cool plug-ins

ArtStudioPro Volume 2 72

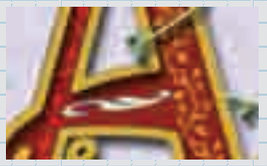
We featured the original ArtStudioPro a few issues back and are delighted to see a new and improved version hit the market. Find out how it can turn your photos into realistic artwork by trying out the tutorial on page 72

Tutorial starts on page 26

Get started in illustration

Use source files as a springboard to creating fabulous illustrations

36 Clone CS3-style



42 Create an illuminated letter

54 Make a cloud shape

60 iStockphoto CopySpace

64 Create a composite

CHECK IT OUT! | TUTORIAL RESOURCE FILES CAN BE FOUND ON THE CD – SEE THE INSIDE BACK COVER

Start to illustrate with Photoshop

With the power it exercises over both vector and bitmap domains, Photoshop is a natural all-rounder for creating compelling illustrations

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
Four to five hours

YOUR EXPERT
Sam Gilbey

ON THE CD
Source files

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- DYNAMIC BRUSHES
- CUSTOM SHAPES
- FREEHAND DRAWING SKILLS
- LAYER MASK TECHNIQUES
- BLENDING MODES

It's partly because of the name, but it's still a little tempting to see Photoshop as simply the digital equivalent of a photo processing lab. And yes, for photo manipulation it's the bee's knees, as they say, but the reality is that those techniques are merely the foundation for your imagination to bounce off into more creative realms. Editing images that already exist is one thing, but manipulating those images to create something entirely new, partly by design and occasionally by happy accident, is really where it's at. After all, it's that thrill which only artistic creation can give that made you pick up this magazine in the first place, isn't it?

Illustrating in Photoshop really is a joy, because the chances are if you can think of it you can create it. Naturally, you'll need to learn the techniques first, but hopefully that's where we can come in. In this tutorial we've combined a number of key techniques to show how Photoshop allows you to merge styles with ease. Rather than creating some flat vector shapes and leaving it at that, we'll show you how to use the brush tools and dabble with some freehand airbrushing, adding texture and depth. And you'll also be creating your own custom vector shapes which you can reuse over and over again.

In the end, whether you prefer to draw by hand or work more meticulously plotting paths, appreciating the scope of what you can do and expanding your skills can only be a good thing. Because the more you can utilise the broad range of techniques that Photoshop offers, the more breadth you'll soon find in your illustration.

CREATED IN CS2 BUT MOST TECHNIQUES WORK IN EARLIER VERSION | **WORKS WITH**

Expert Tip

Drawing in Photoshop

For the freehand drawing aspects of this tutorial, you'll definitely get the best results with a tablet and pen, such as the Wacom Intuos3 series. You'll find that if you draw slowly in Photoshop you'll get a rather wobbly line, so the trick is to make your marks quickly and confidently. Naturally this takes practice, but there's nothing to stop you scanning in a pencil sketch, or tracing the outlines with the pen tools if you prefer.

Expert Tip

Dynamic brushes

We've had a brief look at brush dynamics in this tutorial (see step 13), but it's really worth exploring this for yourself in some detail, as it's a very powerful way to add variety to brushes. You can control the opacity variation, and even the colour hue and saturation variation of each brush stroke. Coupled with the fact that you can create your own custom brushes, this offers limitless potential.

FIRST STEPS

Don't be afraid of the blank canvas

01 Getting set up Open up Photoshop and go to File>New. Create a document that's 360mm wide by 290mm high, at 300 pixels per inch. Open the background photo from the disc, go to Select>Select All, and copy and paste it into the new document. Position it in the bottom left corner, increasing it in scale to about 110%.

02 Invisible layer group Click the arrow at the top right of the Layers palette and select New Group. Reduce the Opacity to 0%, with the slider at the top of the palette. Select the Pen tool and hit the Shape Layers icon in the Options bar. Create a shape that follows the outline of the building. Double-click the colour square in the Layers palette and pick a cream tone for the main wall.

03 Making shapes Having the group invisible means you can build up detail and pick colours from the photo without having to move your design out of the way all the time. The aim is not to be too accurate – we want this rundown shack to stay looking rundown. So start defining more shapes on top of the main outline. Every few shapes, reveal the group and see how it's developing.

04 Using blending modes for shadows It's a bright blue day, so pick a deep blue for the shadows (such as hex 295079) and follow the outline of the main diagonal shadow by clicking points with the Pen. Set the layer blending mode to Multiply from the top left menu on the Layers palette, with Opacity at 50%.

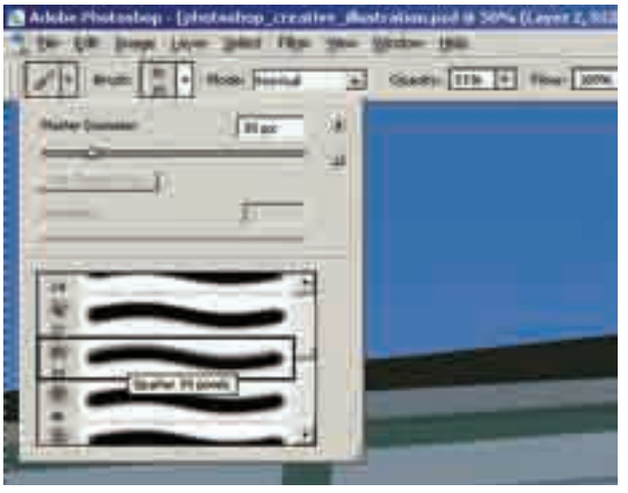
05 Adding the slats Making sure you're on a layer beneath that big shadow, select a slightly lighter (and greyer) blue and add the edges of the wooden slats with the Pen tool. Make sure that you keep the mode set to Multiply for these elements. Also add the diagonal shadows that fall to the right of the vertical beams on each slat.

06 Curving your paths When you click and release the Pen tool, a new point is added that connects to the last in a straight line. This has been perfect for creating the basic building structure, but now we want to add some weathered paint details. This time when you follow a shape, hold the mouse down and move it to adjust the curves as you go.

THE BACKGROUND WILL SOON BE COMPLETE

Just a few more details and we'll be working on the figure

07 Background gradient Once you're happy that your building is detailed enough (hide the photo to check that it works without it), select the background layer. Click the foreground colour on your Tools palette and select a light tone for the blue sky and then a dark one for the background colour. Pick the Gradient tool and click and drag a vertical gradient.

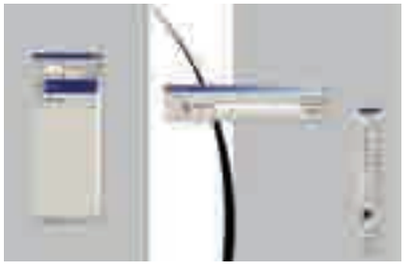


08 Choosing a brush Create a new layer above the group of shapes. Select the Brush tool and click the arrow next to the icon representing the brush diameter on the Options bar. Scroll down the set of default brushes and choose the Spatter 39 pixels brush. Set Opacity to 50%.

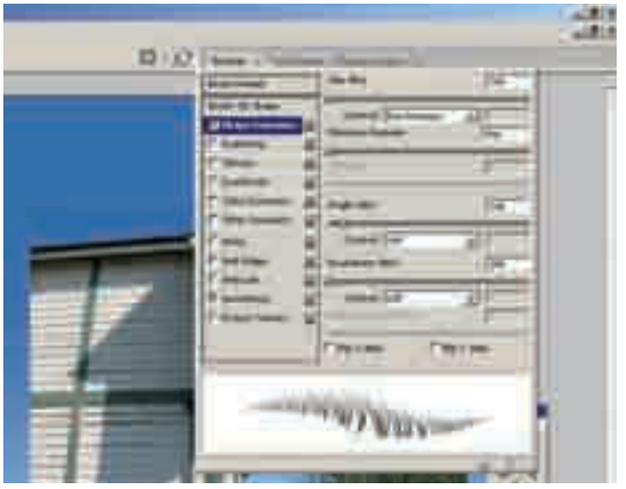
09 Using the brush We definitely recommend using a pen tablet for anything freehand, but we're just adding a few subtle details here so a mouse should still be okay. Pick colours from the background and start adding textured strokes to the shadows, the green beams and around the flaking paint marks. Increase or decrease the brush size as needed.

10 Burning the shack Click the arrow to the top right of the Layers palette and duplicate the group. Click it again and merge the group. Select the painted layer, click the arrow again and merge it down. Use the Burn tool with a similar spatter brush to work textured shadows into the piece. Select the Range to be Highlights with Exposure at 10% to keep it subtle.

11 Softening the effect We found that while we liked the texture, it was a little too obtrusive for a background. Reduce the Opacity of the layer to 50% so you can see the original layer group beneath. Drag the photo out to the right for reference if you haven't done so already, and add any other detail you want.



12 Defining a custom brush On a new layer above everything so far, use the Pen tool to create a tall blade of grass (in black). Right-click the layer on the Layers palette (Ctrl-click on a Mac) and rasterize the layer. Select all, and copy and paste the blade into a new document. Go to Edit>Define Brush Preset and name it 'Grass'.



13 Brush dynamics The brush will have been added to the bottom of the current selection of brushes. Select it and click the Brushes tab to the top right of the Options palette. Tick the Shape Dynamics box and set Angle Jitter to around 10%. Feel free to adjust the other settings, but the aim is to create a nicely random patch of grass.

Expert Tip

Layer masks are your best friend

When it comes to integrating patterns seamlessly into your work, layer masks are an essential tool to master. Because you can use all your custom brushes on the mask itself, it's easy to blend that extra level of mystery into your work. Creating an illustration and just adding some patterns on top at the end might be fun, but merging it with the elements you've created, such as the figure and shack here, is the key to making your style complete.

Expert Tip

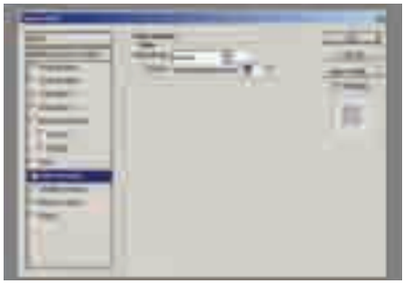
Blending modes

We've also taken a brief look at blending modes here, and along with layer masks they're essential if you want to combine the real with the surreal. Essentially, each blending mode interprets the colour of the layer in different ways, and can therefore affect how the lower layers are displayed too. In Multiply, for instance, black is totally opaque, while white is totally transparent. This is perfect for colouring in a drawing without using the Magic Wand to try and erase the white. In this case we've used them to reveal the grass through the coat.

AND SO TO THE FOREGROUND FIGURE

Time for some different techniques and styles

14 Layout guide At this stage you may want to put everything from the background into a layer group. Open the photo of the figure and use the Polygonal Lasso to roughly cut it out, then paste it onto the document. We've added a shape here to show how you need to position and scale the figure in order to strengthen the composition.



15 Preparing for tracing Go to Layer>Layer Styles>Color Overlay and set a white overlay at an Opacity of 50%. This is so you can trace the dark areas and clearly see what you're doing. Duplicate the layer and set the overlay Opacity to 100%. Hide the layer for now, but reveal it to hide your photo and see your drawing on its own.

16 Outline artwork Select the 5-pixel brush from the default set, and on a new layer above the photos, start to trace the outlines of the face. Make sure the brush Opacity is at 100%, and the document is scaled to 100%. Pressing softly with a pen tablet gives a thinner line. Use a dark grey rather than a black tone.

17 A new hairstyle Using photos of people is a great way to ensure that posture and poses look right, but how closely you stick to them is up to you. It's fun to see how you can create different characters by simply adjusting a few lines here and there. We also thought we'd try an alternative hairstyle.

18 Wider edges Once you're done making the outlines, including a few reference marks for folds in the clothing, add a new layer on top and increase the brush Size to 7. Add a broader outline to the edges of everything, including coat lapels, nose, etc. This is a classic technique used in all kinds of drawing to subtly suggest three dimensions.

19 Flat colours Clear the Color Overlay on the original photo and move it out to the left. Create separate layers for the hair, coat, top and skin, and use a brush from the Calligraphic set (click the arrow at the top right of the Brushes menu) to loosely paint each of them in with a single mid-toned colour.

20 Airbrush shading Add a new layer on top of each flat colour layer for shading. Starting with the face, use a soft-edged brush at various sizes to add both subtle highlights and shadows to the face, referring to the photo for reference. Keep the brush opacity low, and use a soft eraser with a low opacity if you build it up too much.

THE FINAL TOUCHES

Perfecting the figure and adding some embellishments

21 **Don't add – take away** When shading the coat, try a slightly different method. Paint all over the coat with a dark tone, then use the Eraser to lighten where needed, thereby leaving the shadows in place. Keep the brush large to start with, then gradually reduce it as you work in the creases and folds.

22 **Extra outlines and highlights** Duplicate the outline layer, and apply a white Color Overlay to it. Use the Move tool to select it, then hold Shift and click the left cursor key to displace it. Just leave the outline around the coat. Use a bright pale yellow on a new layer to paint a bright highlight on the right side of the figure, and also paint some soft clouds in the background.

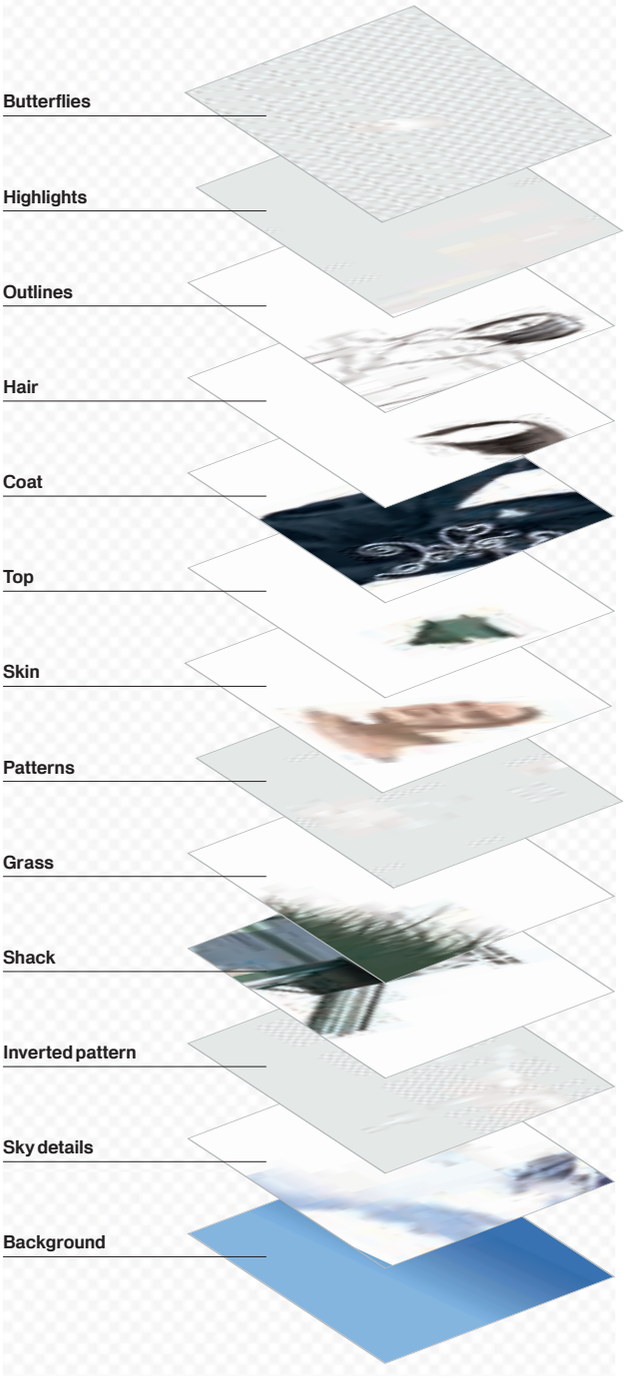
23 **Creating custom shapes** Open the window pattern file and use the Pen to trace one of the shapes. In Edit>Define Custom Shape, save the vector to the Custom Shape Tool menu. Create four or five shapes, return to the main canvas and select the star-shaped tool by clicking and holding the Rectangle tool. Now pick a shape.

24 **Pretty patterns and masks** Position your shapes in a pattern. Ensure that your shack is within a layer group. Make the pattern as large as possible on-screen, then merge the layers together. Use the Magic Wand to select it. Now select the shack group and go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal Selection. Unlink the mask and scale the pattern down. Put a white version behind it for an inverted effect.

25 **Finishing touches** We've added more patterns and some butterfly shapes, and made the girl transparent by copying the flat coat colour layer. Set the blending mode of the lower version to Screen, then add a layer mask to the upper version. A gradient fading from white down to black in the mask will gradually reveal the background. Now why not try your own piece using these techniques?

The layer structure

Get your layers in the right order



FOCUS ON ADJUSTMENT LAYERS

Adjustment layers

Adjustment layers are the cornerstone of any sensible Photoshop workflow

Color Balance adjustment layer We wanted to warm the image a little to produce a more pleasing feel in the portrait. The Color Balance adjustment set to Midtones actually produces a better result than Photo Filter. Increase the Red and Yellow sliders by the same amount to suit.

Levels adjustment layer We darken the corners with a Levels adjustment layer. We've darkened by moving the slider rightwards then used Ctrl/Cmd+I to invert the layer mask before painting the darkening back in with a large white brush in each corner. We've then dropped the layer opacity and set blending to Luminosity to avoid saturation being affected.

Whenever you make any sort of adjustment to your image with the Image>Adjustment commands, you discard some of your original image info. The greater the adjustment, the more info you discard. This can never be retrieved without going backwards in the History palette. If you keep applying Curves adjustments one after the other, for example, the image will eventually degrade beyond recognition, and at a much faster rate with 8-bit than 16-bit images, as you're starting with far less info in the first place.

We can't avoid throwing away info, but we need to try and minimise the amount we throw away. If we apply our adjustments directly to pixel-based layers, we run into potential problems when we change our minds down the line, and have to apply counter adjustments to correct the ones we've already made. Eventually we'll run into trouble and face going back in the History states and starting from scratch. It's for this reason Adobe invented the adjustment layer – a layer that sits above our original info, previewing the chosen adjustment in real-time without affecting the underlying info. If we want to change the adjustment at any time, we simply double-click it. No underlying pixels are actually altered until we flatten the image.

Image degradation

Try this experiment to see the effect of adjustments

Try as an experiment to continually lighten and darken your image by dragging the middle slider left and right in Levels with 10 to 20 applications via the standard Image>Adjustment. Notice how gaps begin to appear between information levels on the histogram. These gaps describe missing levels of information that can't be retrieved unless you go backwards in the History palette to undo your adjustments. Adjustment layers will also remove information when the image is eventually flattened, but they allow you to minimise the number of necessary adjustments so that the gaps won't become so pronounced.

Working with masks

Layer masks let us localise adjustments

As with standard layers, we can work with masks on our adjustment layers. Indeed, adjustment layers come with a mask as standard – note the rectangle icon next to the half-black, half-white circle on the adjustment layer. Click this to activate the mask, then paint on the canvas with a black or white brush to reveal or conceal the adjustment on that part of the image. We can even work with shades between black and white to provide varying levels of mask opacity.

Curves adjustment layer Our first adjustment layer is a Curves one. We used an 'S' curve to increase the contrast of this portrait, pushing upwards at this highlight end, and pulling downwards at the shadow end.

Hue/Saturation adjustment layer An increase in contrast will also increase saturation, producing an unflattering reddening of the skin. We can ensure that saturation isn't affected by setting the Curves blending mode to Luminosity, but the Saturation slider of a separate Hue/Saturation layer gives us a little more control, letting a little saturation increase creep in.

Tip

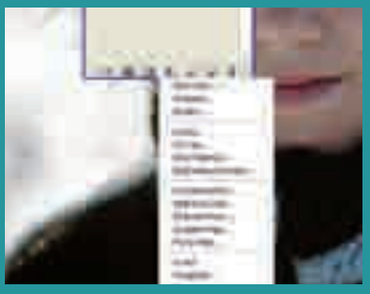
16-bit mode

While you can limit the number of times adjustments are applied using adjustment layers, some types can still take their toll on image info. By starting with 16 rather than 8-bit images, you'll have far more headroom to play with. You'll need to shoot Raw and select 16-bit mode at the processing stage.

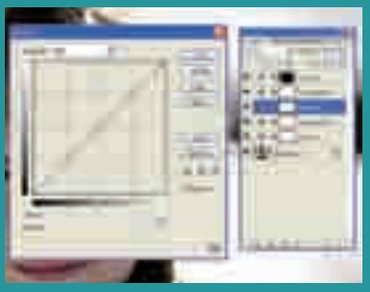
Using adjustment layers

Take the pain out of image adjustments

Adjustment layers are remarkably easy to use. Each adjustment is named appropriately in the Layers palette and can be renamed as required



01 Adding an adjustment layer To add one, click the circle at the bottom of the Layers palette or use Layer>New Adjustment Layer. Not all Image>Adjustments have adjustment layer equivalents, but the most important do.



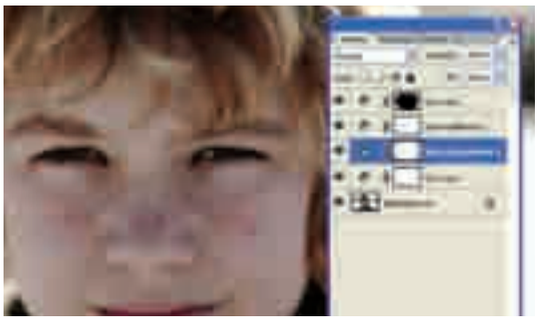
02 Alter the adjustment Once you select your adjustment layer, the dialog appears. Make the changes – the layer appears above the one last selected. Double-click the icon on the layer to alter changes.

03 Blending, opacity and masks You can now alter the layer's blending mode and opacity. By selecting the mask to the right of the icon and using a black or white brush, you can mask or reveal parts of the adjustment.

Layer order

The order of layers is key to how adjustments are made

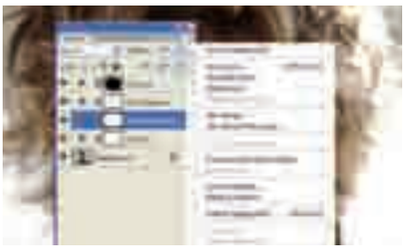
Note that an adjustment layer only affects those layers that sit underneath. Any new layers placed above won't be affected by that adjustment layer. You can drag and drop adjustment and pixel layers to change the order if required. Note too that adjustment layers also affect other adjustment layers in the same way as pixel-based layers – try switching the order of different types of adjustment layers to see how this works.



Flattening our image

After adjusting, we're ready to flatten

When we've finished making edits and we've saved everything as a Photoshop (PSD) file to ensure we have the original version with adjustment layers, we can flatten all of the layers into a single one to enable us to save the file again as a JPEG or TIFF for distribution or printing. Opening or printing is much quicker for a flattened file than one with several layers, so it's good practice to keep a flattened version of your image as well as a full version.



Cloning CS3-style

The Clone Stamp tool gets several exciting new features in Photoshop CS3, including an overlay preview of the pixels that you are about to clone with…

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
45 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Matthew Henry

ON THE CD
Source photo

The Clone Stamp tool is one of the Photoshop originals, so its update comes as something of a surprise, particularly considering how often it now seems to get left on the shelf with the arrival of its cleverer cousins, Spot Healing, Healing and Patch (although the new features also work with the standard Healing brush). For anyone late to the party, the Clone Stamp is that rubber stamp -looking icon which clones pixels from one area of an image to another in perfect reproduction, where the healing tools attempt to blend source information with its new surroundings.

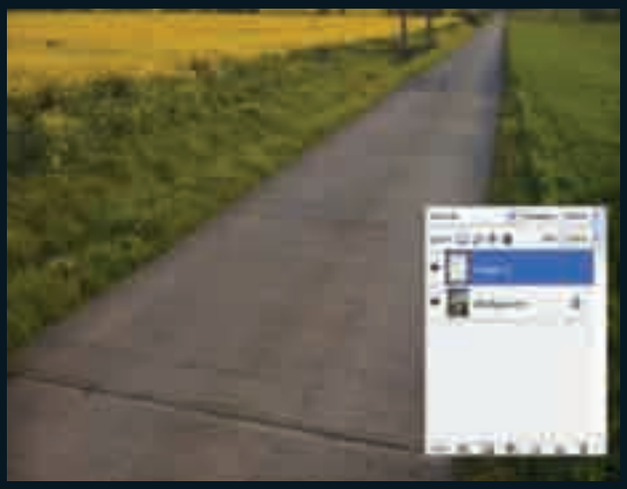
Simply hold down Alt/Option and click on the area you want to reproduce, move the mouse across to where you want to reproduce it and start painting. The Clone Stamp is king for any of those circumstances where the blending of the healing tools would cause problems – either because you're working close to areas of changing contrast where healing produces a blurry blob, or simply because you want an exact reproduction of an area or subject.

The features new to CS3 are divided between the Tool Options bar and a new palette labelled Clone Source. The Show Overlay function is perhaps the most immediately exciting as it lets you see a preview of the pixels you're about to clone with – great for aligning your source and destination info. You can ensure this preview disappears the moment you start painting with the Auto Hide facility, and even change the preview appearance with Opacity, Blending and Invert controls. It's this feature we'll be focusing on in the step-by-step tutorial, but we cover the rest on page 38.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP CS3

SEND IN THE CLONES

Start with the basics



01 Create a cloning layer We're going to start by taking the join area out of the path in the foreground. Add a new layer, press 'S' to select the Clone Stamp tool and make sure that All Layers is selected in the Sample section of the Tool Options bar. We can now do all our cloning work on this new layer without touching the background layer.

02 Set up the brushes Now hit 'F' to go to Full-screen mode and use Ctrl/Cmd and + to zoom into the image, moving to the desired area by holding the spacebar and clicking and dragging. Ensure the Align box is ticked and set the brush Opacity and Flow to 100%. Change Hardness to 50%.

03 Set the source point Use the [and] keys to get the brush size slightly bigger than the trough area in the path we want to fill. Hold down Alt/Option and click an area just below and at the edge of the path on the right-hand side. This is your source starting point.

04 Line up with Overlay Now go to the Clone Source palette, tick the Show Overlay box and change Opacity to 50%. Move back up to the area we want to replace, and line up the overlaid Clone Source path edge with the path edge underneath. Zoom in further if you need a closer look.

05 Clone to perfection Next, simply click and drag leftwards over the trough. As Align is checked, it doesn't matter if you need to stop to steady your hand – just try and start again in the same place you left off. You can turn the overlay off at this point if it's obstructing your view. Finish when you hit the left edge of the path.

06 Next cloning task Now we've grasped the basics of cloning and making use of the overlay, we can move on to taking the power cables out of the sky. Use the spacebar and click and drag to move to the start of the cables top left. As there's nothing to line up here, we don't need to make use of the overlay.

07 A new technique Rather than sourcing next to the wires and dragging downwards in a single straight line, we're going to use a different technique. In areas with subtle tonal transition and little detail, long brush strokes can leave noticeable cloning marks. Set the brush back to 0% Hardness before we begin.

Expert Tip

Align and non-aligned cloning

Once you've established your source point and have started painting, the same relationship in coordinates from source to destination will be maintained. If the Align box is checked in the Tool Options bar, this relationship is preserved even when you release the mouse, move elsewhere and click again. Without the Align box checked, the source reverts to its original place once the button is released. Best to try this in practice to see how it works.

Tip

Alignment with Show Overlay

Show Overlay illustrates the difference between aligned/non-aligned cloning. With Align checked, once you start painting, the overlay doesn't move when you release the mouse. It won't move until another source point with Alt/Option is established. With Align unchecked, the overlay moves as soon as you release the mouse.

New cloning features
Edit with even more precision

The Clone Stamp tool has long been a favoured option of Photoshop users and has helped eradicate all sorts of unsightly blemishes. With Photoshop CS3, Adobe has given the tool a bit of a makeover, making it even more powerful than it was to begin with. Here's a look at what's different:

01 Show Overlay Simulates the source info as you place it over the original image. The info directly under the pointer is what you need focus on to start. You can vary its opacity, set it to Auto Hide once you start to paint, and even change the blending mode.

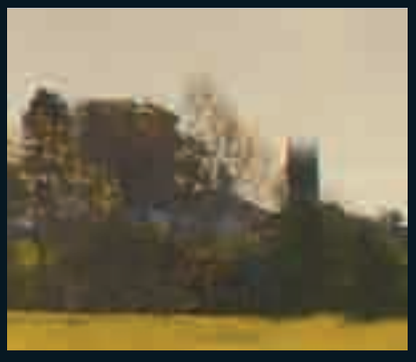
02 Layer control The new Sample options allow us far greater control – we can now choose to sample only the current layer and layers below in addition to current and all layers, as well as choosing to include or omit adjustment layers.

03 Transform source This performs a temporary transformation of your source material for the purpose of cloning, allowing you to reproduce material at a different size or angle. It's hard to use without Overlay on.

08 New source point Now take a brush considerably bigger than the cable width and start from the top left on your chosen cable, using Alt/Option to source from one side. Be sure to source a little distance away because the softness of the brush puts you at risk of re-introducing the cables.

09 Altering source points Paint out a small portion of the cable then move across to the other side and use Alt/Option to source again and paint another section. By continually moving from one side or the other to source as you move down the cable, we can reduce the likelihood of noticeable lines of cloning or repeated patterns.

10 Lining up with Overlay Continue until all the cables are removed. Now move down to the base of the left leg of the first wooden pylon. Turn Show Overlay back on and take a source point from one side at the point where the yellow flower starts to meet the green stalks. Move across to the post, matching the line of the flower, and start painting.

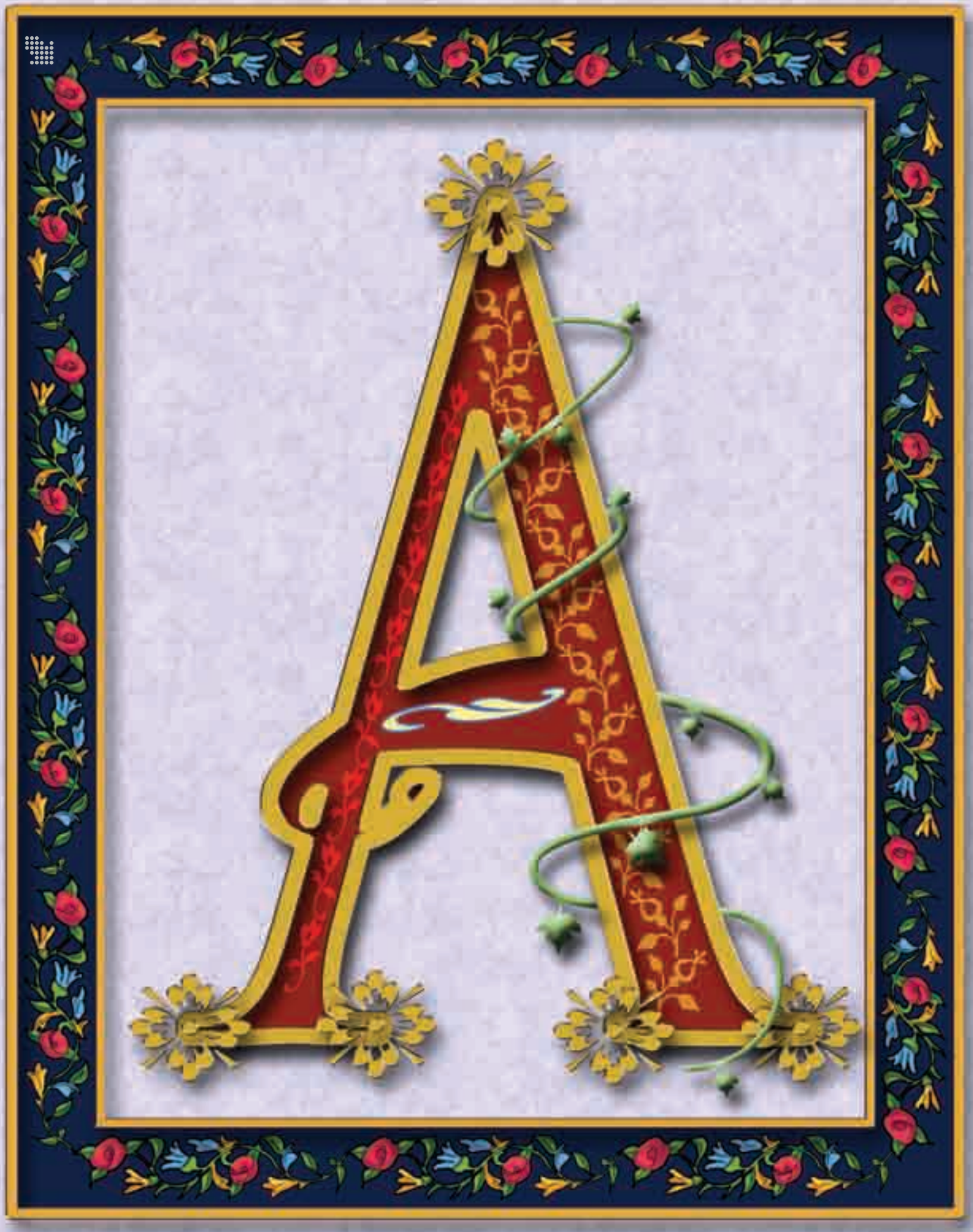


11 Creative cloning Work up towards where the yellow flower ends. You may need to re-source now and use Show Overlay to maintain the top line of the flower. Once this is done you'll need to be a bit more creative with the bushes and trees. Turn off Overlay and sample bits from different points on both sides to avoid creating repeated patterns.

12 Repeat to finish Once you work up to the sky you may find that the top edge of the new trees fades out too gradually because of the soft brush. Increase Hardness to 70% and use the sky as a source point to firm up the tree top edges. Repeat the process described for the rest of the pylons, using Show Overlay where lines need matching up.

NEXT ISSUE | CHECK BACK FOR MORE GREAT PHOTOSHOP CS3 TUITION

eMag



KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

USING CUSTOM SHAPES
CUSTOM BRUSHES
SELECTIONS
LAYER STYLES

Create an illuminated letter

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
1.5 hours

YOUR EXPERT
Tim Shelbourne

ON THE CD
Border_sketch.jpg
Border_Brush.abr
Illuminated letter.jpg

Reviving a lost art form from the mists of time, we create a classic illuminated letter with a modern twist – courtesy of Adobe Photoshop

The illuminated letter is one of the earliest art forms, dating back to medieval times and evident in many of the oldest and most memorable written documents. An art form which was developed initially as a way of adding illustrative elements to the written word, we can utilise similar techniques today in the digital arena, through using Adobe Photoshop.

Of course, we need a paper base to work on so we'll create this first by using a simple Pattern Fill layer. Then we'll create the initial framework for the letter by using a standard Photoshop typeface, which we will manipulate and add to with the Pen tool.

The first decorative touches are added via a simple stroke. The real decoration starts with the use of Custom Shapes, all of them supplied directly by Photoshop. Custom Shapes can be used in a number of ways, but here we're using them as simple filled pixel shapes, to act as a base which wonderfully effective Layer Styles can be applied to. Using a whole collection of these embellished shapes together can turn our simple letter into a symphony of shape and colour.

No illuminated letter is complete without a suitably decorative border. Drawing this manually would be monotonous and painstaking, so you have a choice here. The key to simplifying this task is to create a Custom Brush, with which we can stamp the repeating border pattern. You can either create this brush yourself, following the walkthrough, or dive right in and load the completed brush into Photoshop, because we've included the brush itself on the CD!

So if you thought text was boring, think again, and take a closer look at the ABC of the illuminated letter!

FIRST STEPS
Create a path

01 Prepare for paths! Open the supplied sketch, 'border_sketch.jpg', and add a new layer. Ensure that your foreground colour is black and choose the Pen tool. Choose the Paths icon in the Options bar, check Auto Add/Delete and choose the Add to Path Area icon. Make sure you're working on the empty layer and then click the tab for the Paths palette or go to Window>Paths.

02 Trace the outline Now plot your first path point at the far left-hand end of the design. Continue constructing a path around the outlines of the design, using the underlying sketch as a guide. Remember, to create curved path segments you need to click and drag with the Pen tool. To create any sharp changes in direction, hold down the Alt/Option key and click the previously plotted point.

03 Choose the Brush tool Once you've created the path around the entire design, close the path by clicking again on the first point you plotted. Now click the Brush tool and choose a small hard brush from the Brush picker. Set the size of this brush to 5 pixels.

WORKS WITH | ADOBE PHOTOSHOP 7, CS, CS2

Tip

Loading a brush

If you prefer to use the brush we've supplied on the CD rather than create it from scratch yourself, you need to load it into Photoshop. Insert the disc into your computer, open Photoshop, choose the Brush tool and click in the Brush picker. Hit the small right-pointing arrow and choose Load Brushes. Navigate to the folder on the CD containing the brush file ('border_brush.abr'). Now click on the file and hit Load. The brush will be added to your currently displayed brush set.

WORK YOUR WAY ALONG YOUR PATH

It's all in the brushwork…

04 Modify and stroke Go to the Brushes palette, click Brush Tip Shape and set Minimum Diameter to 55%. In the Paths palette, right/Ctrl-click the workpath and pick Stroke Path. In the Stroke Path dialog, choose Brush for Tool, and check the Simulate Pressure box. Click OK to stroke the path. Once stroked, click off the workpath in the Paths palette.

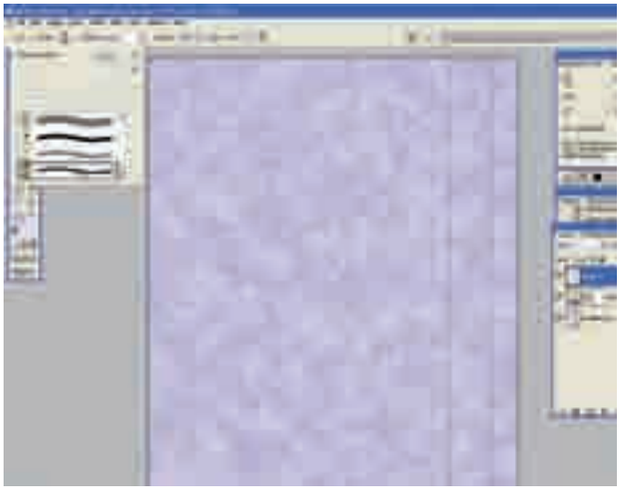
05 Open paths Start to trace over the details within the decorative border with the Pen tool. These paths are separate and open, so after you've traced a path over each of the detail lines, hit the Esc key before drawing the next one. When you're done, click on the Brush tool and reduce the size of the brush to 3 pixels. Now stroke these numerous paths as in the previous steps.

06 Define the brush preset In the Layers palette, click on the background layer and go to Edit>Fill, choosing White for Contents. Now flatten the image via Layers>Flatten Image, then go to Select>All. To define the new brush, go to Edit>Define Brush Preset. Type a name for the brush and click OK. Now save this image.

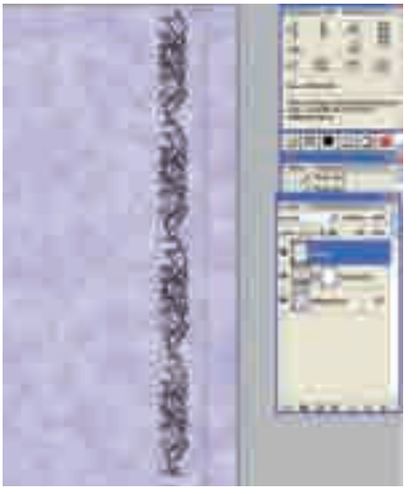
07 Create a new document Create a new document via File>New. In the dialog, choose Millimetres for measurement units and enter 240 for Width and 290 for Height. Choose Pixels/Inch for Resolution units and enter 300 for Resolution. In this new document, click the foreground colour swatch and choose a light blue. Click the background swatch and choose a slightly deeper shade of this colour.

08 Create the paper Go to Filter>Render>Clouds, then click OK. Now go to Layer>New Fill Layer>Pattern. Click OK. Click in the Pattern swatch and hit the small right-pointing arrow. Choose Artist Surfaces. Select Parchment from the swatches, increase the Scale to 480% and click OK. In the Layers palette, set the blending mode for this layer to Multiply – Opacity to 25%.

09 Make a selection Add a new layer. Choose the Rectangular Marquee tool and drag a long thin selection down the document. Now choose the Brush tool. Click in the Brush picker and select the Custom Border Brush you created earlier. Hit 'D' to revert to default foreground/background colours.



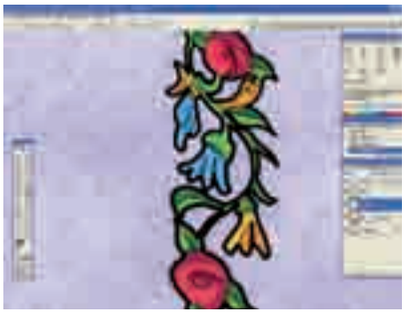
10 Repeating pattern Go to Brush options (F5), and click Brush Tip Shape. Click in the Angle box and type -90. In the Brush picker, set the size of the brush to 800 pixels. Now, using the selection edge as a guide and using single clicks of the brush, place four dabs of this brush end-to-end down the document within the selection.



FRAME IT

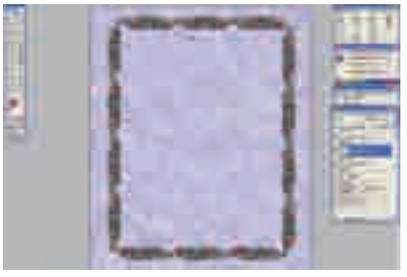
Create a beautiful border

11 Colouring in Hit Ctrl/Cmd+D to deselect. Zoom into the border pattern, click on the Pattern layer and add a new layer. Now choose the Brush tool and a small hard brush from the Brush picker. Choosing your colours from the Color palette, paint in the various colours of the foliage and flowers within the pattern. Make sure to stay within the lines!



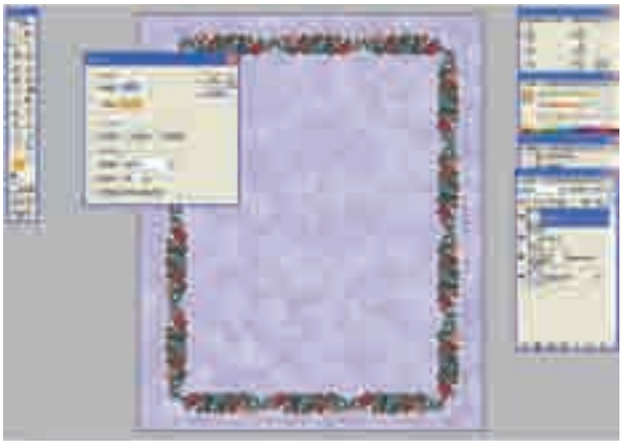
12 Shading Once you've filled in all the colours, choose a soft brush and add some touches of darker colour to give the impression of a little variation and shading. Once you're happy with the colours and finish, click on the upper outline letter for the border and go to Layer>Merge Down.

13 Duplicate, rotate and erase Duplicate this layer. Choose the Move tool (V) and use the arrow keys to position this duplicate layer on the left side of the document. Now go to Edit>Rotate>180 degrees. Copy this layer again and move it into the middle of the document. Use the Eraser to erase the last repeat of the pattern on this central section.



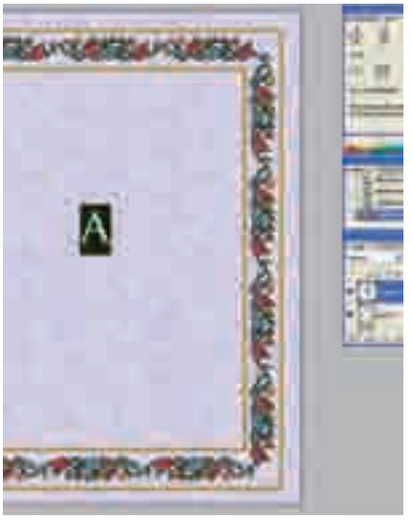
14 Position & fit Go to Edit>Transform>Rotate 90 CW. Drag this section of border to the top of the document. Copy this layer, drag the final section to the bottom of the document and go to Edit>Transform>Rotate 180 degrees. Now, a layer at a a time, place the sections of border so they join together at each end.

15 Stroked outline Merge the border layers by going to Layer>Merge Layers. Using the Move tool, place the border in the document. Add a new layer, pick the Rectangular Marquee tool; drag a selection around the outside of the border. For the foreground, pick deep gold. Go to Edit>Stroke. Enter 30 for Width and Centre for Location.



16 Outline take two! Deselect the border. Duplicate this layer and go to Edit>Transform>Scale. Use the handles around the bounding box to adjust the size of the second stroked outline so that it fits around the inside of the border. Now go to Layer>Merge Down to merge these two layers together.

17 Type the letter Choose a colour for your letter from the foreground swatch and then select the Type tool. In the Options bar set the Point Size to 72. Click in the centre of the document and type the letter 'A'. Click and drag over the letter to highlight it and click in the Font picker. Select your chosen typeface; something fairly plain is best. Here we've used Trajan Pro Bold.



Tip

Changing colours

At any time during this project you can change the colours of any elements in your image. Simply choose your target layer in the Layers palette and go to Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation. Use the Hue slider to modify the actual colour, and use the Saturation slider to change the intensity of the colour. Make sure the Preview box is checked so that you can judge the changes in your image.

Tip

Follow the arrows!

As we're making fine adjustments here to position sections of the border, you may find that dragging with the Move tool is clumsy. For more control, once you've selected the tool try using the direction arrow keys on the keyboard to move the elements one pixel at a time. Also, make sure Snap is disabled by going to View>Snap. If there's a checkmark against Snap, click to remove it.

Tip

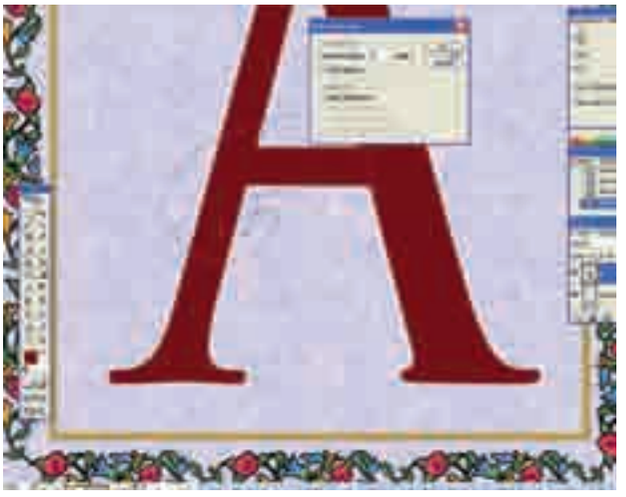
Laying on the layer styles

Remember, you can add a layer style to any of the elements within your illuminated letter. To do this, simply click on the layer containing the element you want to add the layer style to, such as the gold stroked border lines, and add the layer style in the usual way. Also, it's worth noting that you can call up a layer style either via the Layers menu as we've done throughout this project, or simply by clicking the Layer Style icon at the base of the Layers palette.

SIZE IT UP

Make the letter fit the frame

18 Scale to fit Click in the Point Size box in the Options bar and enter 400 for Size. Hit the Commit checkmark in the Options bar. Right/Ctrl-click the Type layer in the Layers palette and choose Rasterize Type. Now go to Edit>Transform>Scale and drag on the handles to increase the size of the letter as in the screenshot.



19 Use the Pen tool With the Pen tool, draw a scroll shape over the crossbar of the 'A', making sure to loop this scroll over the left-hand leg of the letter. Click inside the path and choose Make Selection. Uncheck Anti-Alias and ensure Feather is set to 0. Click OK. Now go to Edit>Fill, choosing Foreground Color for Contents.

20 Select and stroke Add a new layer. Hold your pointer over the thumbnail for the 'A' layer, hold down the Ctrl/Cmd key and click to generate a selection. Choose a deep gold for the foreground swatch and go to Edit>Stroke. Enter 45 for Width and Centre for Location. Click OK and then deselect.

21 Border fill Click on the merged yellow borders layer and choose the Magic Wand tool. Click inside the two borders to generate a selection. Now choose a fill colour from your foreground swatch and go to Edit>Fill, choosing Foreground Color for Contents. In the Layers palette, drag this layer below the border pattern layer.

22 First shapes Add a new layer and choose the Custom Shape tool. Click in the Shape Picker, click the small right-pointing arrow and choose All. Scroll down the shape thumbnails and choose Floral Ornament 2. Now choose the Fill Pixels icon in the Options bar. Next, click and drag a shape over the apex of the 'A'.

23 Duplicate and position Duplicate this layer. Use the Move tool (V) to position this second shape at the end of one of the serifs on the 'A'. Reduce the size of the shape a little via Edit>Transform>Scale. Duplicate this layer another three times, moving each shape to the other serif ends.

DO IT WITH STYLE

Add a few embellishments

24 Apply a layer style Repeatedly go to Layer>Merge Down until all five of these shape layers are merged together. Go to Layer>Layer Style>Bevel and Emboss. Choose Emboss for Style, 121 for Depth and 6 for Size. Click the Drop Shadow category. Set Distance to 40 and Size to 51. Now click OK.

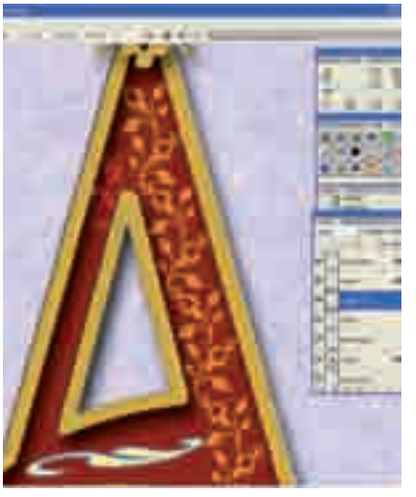
25 Copy and paste style Right/Ctrl-click this layer and choose Copy Layer Style. Now right/Ctrl-click the gold outline layer for the 'A' and choose Paste Layer Style. If you haven't got CS2 you need to do this manually. Click on the top layer in the layer stack and add a new layer. Choose the Custom Shape tool, click in the Shape picker and choose Floral Ornament 1.

26 More shapes Zoom into the upper half of the letter. Now click and drag the shape so that it exactly spans the inner area of the leg, then duplicate this layer. Now go to Edit>Transform>Flip Horizontal. Use the Move tool (V) to drag this second shape down a little. Go to Layer>Merge Down.

27 Duplicate, move and merge Duplicate this layer and use the Move tool (V) to move this second pair of shapes further down so they join up with the first pair. Do this as many times as needed to fill the leg with these shapes. Now go to Layer>Merge Down repeatedly to merge all these layers.

28 Watch that crossbar! Choose a very light yellow for the foreground swatch. Pick the Custom Shape tool and hit Leaf Ornament 2 in the Shape picker. Add a new layer and drag a long thin version of this shape over the crossbar of the 'A'. Go to Edit>Transform> Rotate and rotate the shape a little anti-clockwise by dragging with the mouse. Click Enter.

29 Select and stroke Ctrl/Cmd-click the image thumbnail for this layer to generate a selection from it, then choose a vivid blue for the foreground swatch. Now go to Edit>Stroke, enter 5 for Stroke Width and choose Outside for Location. Add another new layer. Choose a vivid red for the foreground swatch.



30 Draw shape and rotate Using the Custom Shape tool, click in the Shape picker and choose Floral Ornament 3. Now drag one of these shapes in an empty space on the document. Go to Edit>Transform> Rotate and rotate the shape clockwise so it's at the correct angle to fit in the thin leg of the 'A'. You can move the shape into position by dragging inside the bounding box.

Tip

Merging multiple layers

We've been merging a lot of layers here, by repeatedly using the Layer>Merge Down command, which does the job very well but can be a bit monotonous. However, there's another way to merge multiple layers if you have CS2. Click the first of the layers you want to merge together in the Layers palette, then hold down the Ctrl key and click the rest of the layers to be merged. When all your target layers are highlighted, go to Layer> Merge Layers.

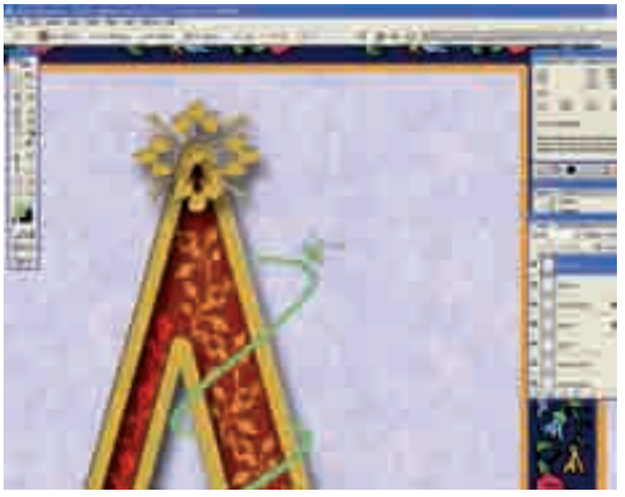
FINAL STEPS
Adding a bit of polish

31 Scale, duplicate and flip Hit the Commit tick in the Options bar. You can fit the width of the shape to the leg via Edit>Transform>Scale. Simply drag on the handles to size the shape. Hit Enter to commit. Duplicate this layer and go to Edit> Transform>Flip Horizontal. Rotate this shape to fit as above and position it below the first shape.

32 Duplicate and merge Go to Layer>Merge Down. Now, as you've done before, make duplicates of this layer and move the duplicate layers down with the Move tool so that multiples of these shapes fill the leg of the 'A'. Click on the top layer in this shape set and repeatedly use Layer>Merge Down until all these shape layers are merged into one.

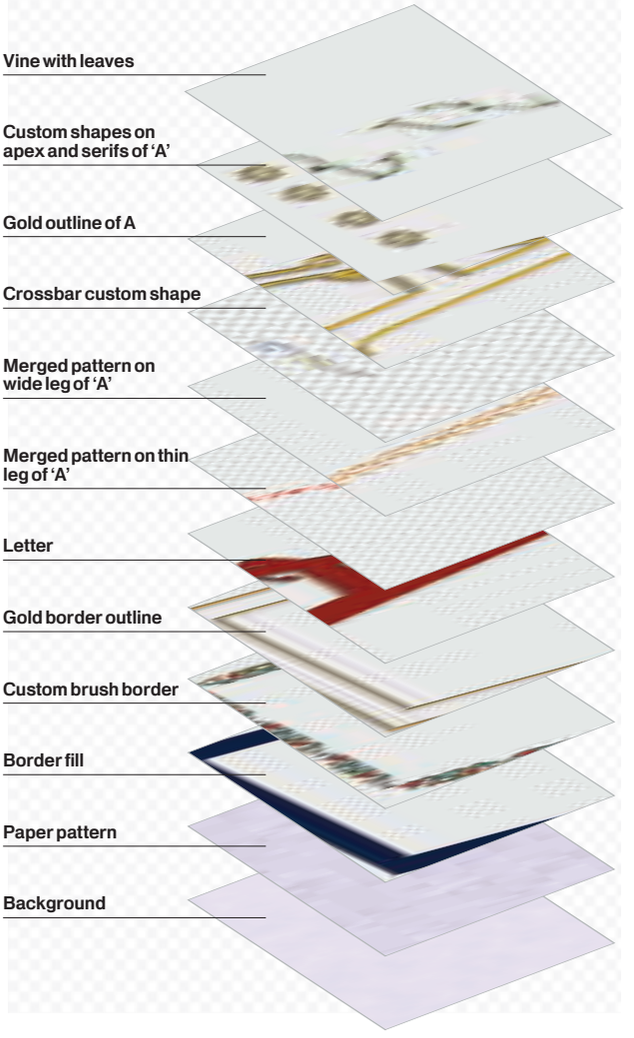
33 Wavy path Add a layer and draw a wavy path on the thick leg of the 'A'. Pick a mid green for the foreground. Hit the Brush tool and pick a hard brush; set Diameter to 30px. Right/Ctrl-click the workpath in the Paths palette and hit Stroke Path. Check Simulate Pressure and click OK.

34 Add the leaves Click off the workpath. Erase the unwanted parts of the vine with the Eraser. Revert to the Custom Shape tool and choose the Leaf 7 shape from the Shape picker. Add a new layer. Now drag a small leaf close to the vine. Rotate the leaf via Edit>Transform> Rotate and drag it onto the vine. Duplicate this layer for each of the other leaves, rotating each one to fit.



35 Merge and add a layer style Go to Layer>Merge Down repeatedly until all the leaves and the vine are on the same layer. Now go to Layer>Layer Style>Bevel And Emboss. Choose Inner Bevel for Style. Set Depth to 221, Size to 38 and Soften to 15. Click on Drop Shadow. Set Distance to 45 and Size to 38, then hit OK.

Layer structure
How we got that illuminated look



eMag

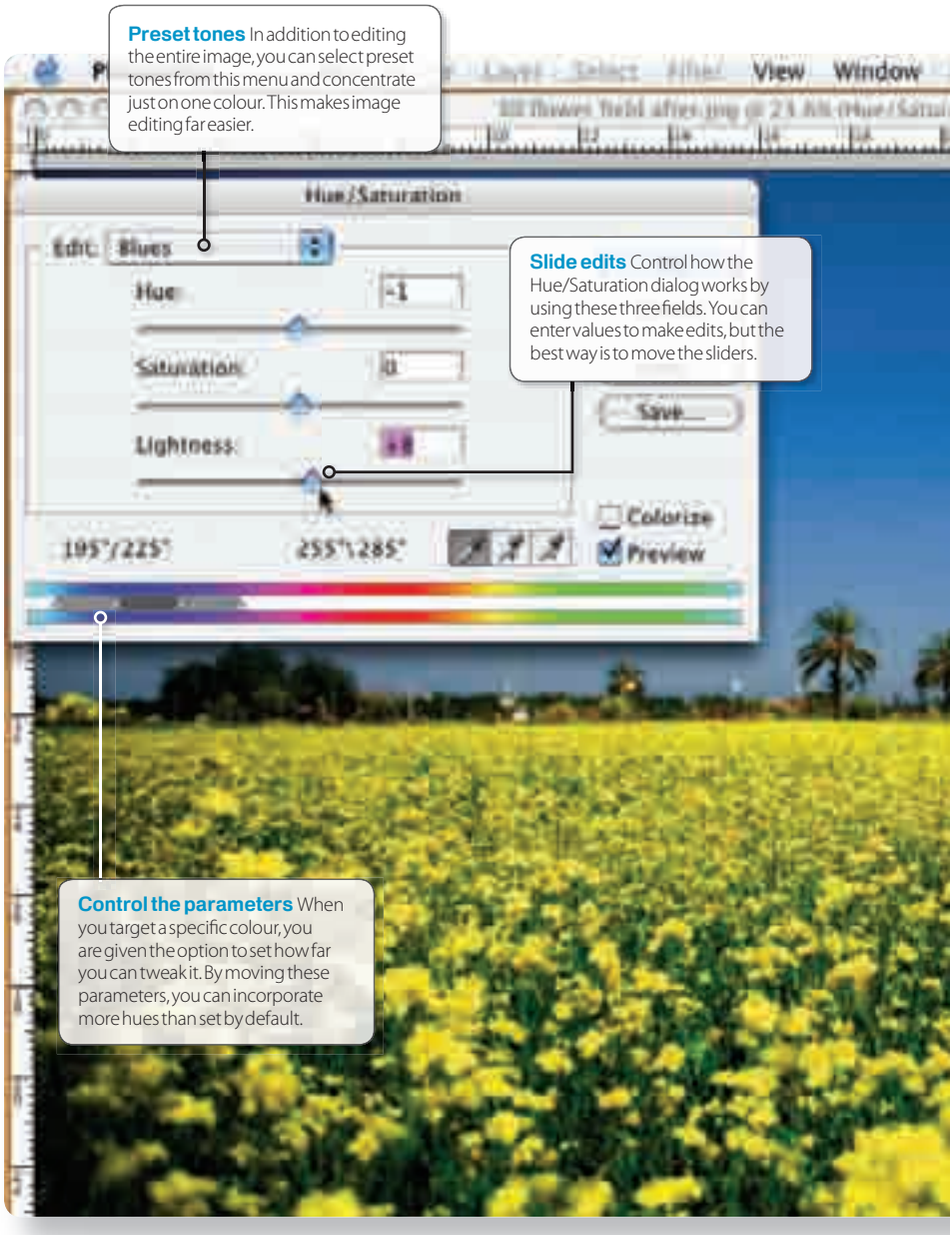
THE BIG TECHNIQUE

Hue/ Saturation

When it comes to adjusting colours in an image, the Hue/Saturation command is hard to beat. We look at what the options can do

Photoshop offers many different ways to control colour and tone in your images, but one of the absolute best is the Hue/Saturation command. Found under the Image>Adjustments menu or applied as an adjustment layer, the Hue/Saturation command allows you to alter the hue, saturation and brightness of an image. You can apply the changes over an entire image or target specific colours. It is this level of control that makes the command so powerful – if you have an image that's basically okay but one shade is letting it down, you can target the colour and improve it.

You control the edits by either moving sliders or entering numbers. There are three bars that control the hue, saturation or lightness, and these are in place whether you alter an entire image or just specific colours. You can also use the command to create monochrome and duotone effects, opening up the creative possibilities even more. We're going to look at all the controls in these pages and show you how they can be used to create perfectly coloured images.


Preset tones In addition to editing the entire image, you can select preset tones from this menu and concentrate just on one colour. This makes image editing far easier.
Slide edits Control how the Hue/Saturation dialog works by using these three fields. You can enter values to make edits, but the best way is to move the sliders.
Control the parameters When you target a specific colour, you are given the option to set how far you can tweak it. By moving these parameters, you can incorporate more hues than set by default.
View
Window
Hue/Saturation
Edit: Blues
Hue
-1
Saturation
0
Lightness
+8
Save...
Colorize
Preview
195°/225°
255°\285°

Control the bars

Your main edit area

After opening up the Hue/Saturation dialog, you'll be presented with two different bars. These bars are your guidance as to how your edits are going to affect the image. The top bar shows what the colour looks like before any edits, while the bottom demonstrates how the edit will affect all the hues (at full saturation). The bars illustrate how the colours would appear in a colour wheel.

Your target

Pick the colours to edit

At the top of the Hue/Saturation dialog is a pull-down menu which enables you to decide what colours are affected by your edit. The default setting is Master, which means that all of the colours are ready for editing. You can also utilise the menu to choose a certain colour to edit. When you select a particular colour, the settings return to 0. You can edit each colour individually as often as you like.

Preserve the original It's a good idea to use a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer because then you know the original is safe. See page 52 for more on how these work.

Tip

Preview the changes

The little Preview checkbox is a good way of gauging how effective your edits are. With it clicked on, you can see the changes appear onscreen. After you have made a few tweaks, click the box off and your image will return to its original state.

Monotone effects

Create stylish images

Using Hue/Saturation, you can get interesting effects on greyscale or full-colour images. This lets you quickly apply artistic effects to any image.

01 Colour greyscale
If you have a greyscale image, begin by going to Image>Mode and then pick RGB Color. Once your file is RGB, open up the Hue/Saturation dialog box.

02 Colorize
Make sure the Colorize checkbox is ticked. If your foreground and background colours are black and white, the image will take on a red hue. If not, it'll have the hue of your foreground colour. Use the sliders to make adjustments.

03 Colour images
You don't have to use greyscale images to get this effect. With a colour image open, hit Colorize. Your image will take on a duotone look, which can be altered by moving the Hue slider and using other colours.

The Hue slider

Getting the colour right

The top bar in the dialog window is the Hue slider. Adjusting this slider will change the colours in your image. You could enter a value in order to do this – however, the easiest way is simply to drag the slider. It's a good idea to think of a colour wheel when dealing with this slider. By dragging the slider to the right, you are moving the colours in a clockwise rotation around the colour wheel. A drag to the left means it will be an anti-clockwise direction.

Work with saturation

Stronger and brighter

While the Hue slider changes the colours in an image, the Saturation slider allows you to adjust how intense they are. By dragging a slider to the left, you are decreasing the saturation of a colour and therefore making it duller. Dragging to the right, however, results in more intense shades. You need to keep an eye on this, as it can cause colours to distort.

EDIT A PHOTO WITH HUE/SATURATION

Quickly boost colours

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

10 minutes

YOUR EXPERT

Jo Cole

Tip

Adjust safely

We made the edits directly on the original, but you can use a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer and tweak without worrying about ruining your original: pick Hue/Saturation in the Adjustment Layer menu.

01 **Assess the problem** Before you start moving sliders around, have a look at the image and work out what needs doing. It might be that using the sliders on the Master setting will work. Unfortunately, in this case it isn't that easy!

02 **Blue sky** The sky is very dark. By selecting Blues in the drop-down menu and moving the Hue slider left, things are much improved. Moving the Saturation slider right also brightens things up, especially when coupled with moving the Lightness slider right.

03 **Not so mellow yellow** An image such as this demands very striking yellow flowers, which will act as a great contrast to the now perfectly blue sky. As you might expect, this calls for Yellows to be set as the colour range. Moving the Hue slider left brightens things considerably.

04 **Boost some more** Now the colour is basically set, it's time to boost the effect even more. As you may have guessed, this involves moving the Saturation slider to the right. We also moved the Lightness slider to the right. Now the yellows sing…

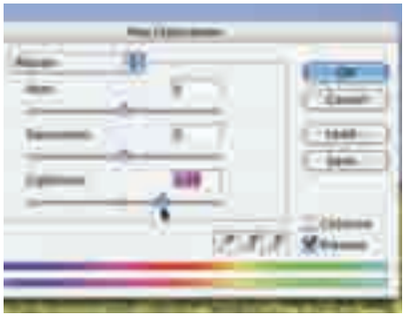
05 **The final touch** The other colour that needs attention here is green. Because the greens in the photos are basically fine, it just needs the Hue and Saturation sliders to be moved to the right for the effect to improve. It doesn't need much but it makes all the difference.

06 **Save for a rainy day** If you have a collection of similar-coloured images, it's worth saving your settings. Once you've made the edits, click Save, name your settings and then save. To apply again, click Load from the dialog and browse to where you saved your file.

Light on your feet

Your final tweaks

The final slider in the dialog is the Lightness one. This lets you add white or black to a colour and gives you the option to temper or darken a certain hue. Drag the slider to the right to add white to a shade and therefore lighten it. Drag to the left to add black, or decrease the lightness.



Set your limits

Advanced controls

As you become more used to how the Hue/Saturation command works, you can begin to set which colours are edited. Open the window and then pick a preset colour from the menu. You'll see four stops appear between the colour bars. The two middle ones set the colour range; the two outer ones set where this range tapers off. You can pick the Eyedropper tool to click or drag in your image and set the colour range to edit. The Add and Subtract eyedroppers allow you to alter this range even more.

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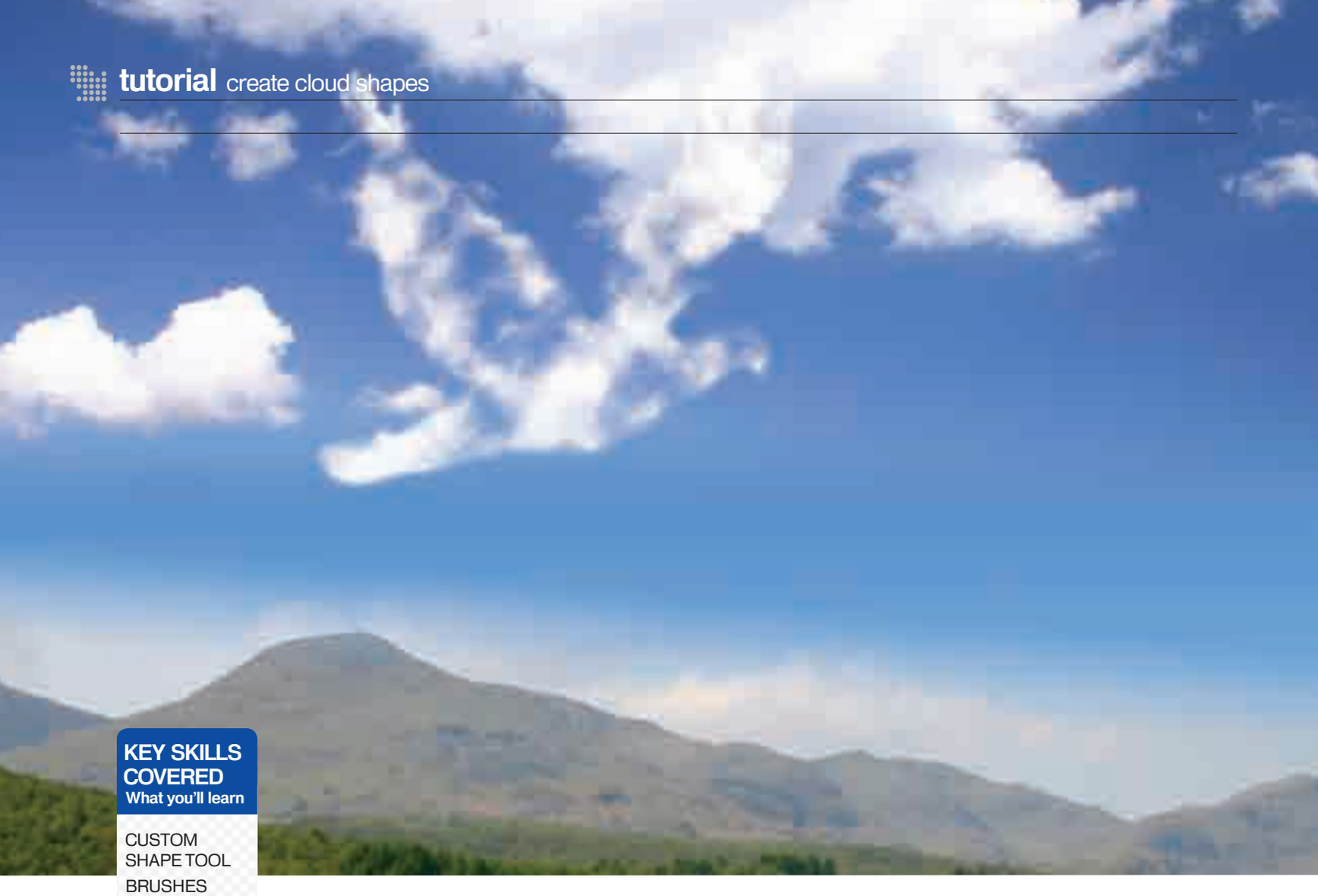


KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- CUSTOM SHAPE TOOL
- BRUSHES PALETTE
- STROKE BRUSHES
- LAYER MASKS
- LAYER BLENDING

Create cloud shapes

Create clouds from scratch and make them form any shape you like with a little help from Photoshop's tools and filters

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
30 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
George Cairns

Now that winter has waned and spring has sprung we can look forward to those halcyon days of summer where it's warm enough to lie on the grass, gaze into the azure blue sky and enjoy a bit of cloud spotting!

Generally, people are prone to seeing shapes and patterns in nature. We've all seen cloud formations that look like objects (or even people), but there's never a camera close to hand to capture the moment. Thanks to Photoshop, however, you can create realistic cloud textures and manipulate them into any shape that you like.

Photoshop is such a powerful package that it offers several ways to approach this challenge. You could draw a shape using the freehand Lasso tool (L) and then clone bits of real cloud into your marquee to form a uniquely shaped cloud. This technique could work, but you'd end up with less than convincing edges on your cloned cloud.

We'll show you how to create a path, turn it into a marquee and generate clouds from scratch with the help of the appropriately named Clouds filter. We'll then go to work using layer blends and blur filters to create more realistic wind-blown clouds inside our shape. To complete the illusion we'll show how to modify a brush tip and stroke it through the path outline to create more cloud-like edges to our shape.

Once you've mastered our cloud shape-creating technique you can apply it to any shape. We'll use a bird-shaped symbol from the Custom Shape tool, but you could draw your own outlines using the Pen tool if you like. So get ready to put your head in the clouds Photoshop-style.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP CS AND ABOVE

CREATE YOUR CLOUDS

Use custom shapes and mix up some filters

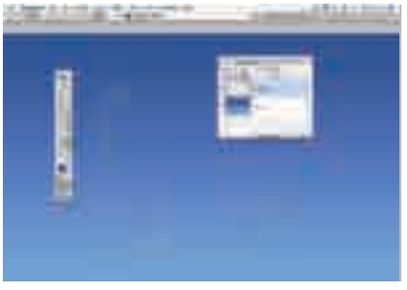
01 **Create new document** Go to File>New. Create a document called 'Cloud Shape' with a Width of 240mm and Height of 150mm. Set the Resolution to 300 pixels/inch. This will create a high quality landscape-oriented shot. Using this document size you'll be able to use the same brush sizes we describe in the following steps. Click OK.

02 **Into the blue** To create a believable blue sky open a cloud photo. Select the Eyedropper tool (I). Click in an area of blue (ideally the light area) to make it the foreground colour. Press 'X' to swap the foreground and background colours around and sample darker blue.

03 **Graduated sky** Go back to the blank Cloud Shape document. To create a gentle graduated blue sky, grab the Gradient tool (G). Click on the Gradient picker and make sure that the tool is set to draw a Foreground to Background gradient. Click OK. Now click the Linear Gradient icon in the Options bar. Drag the tool from top to bottom to create your background sky.

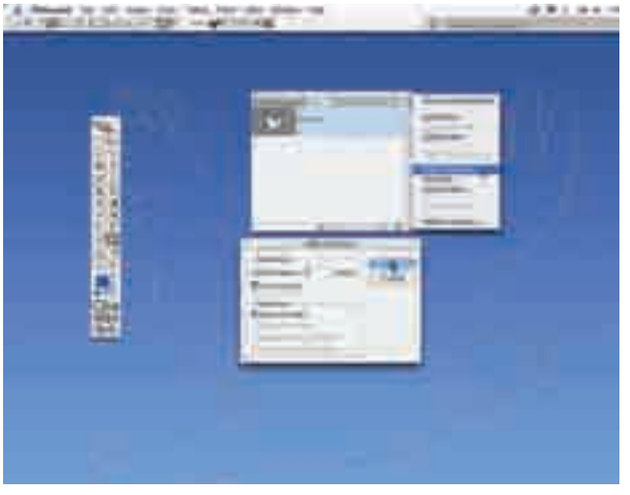
04 **New layer** Click the Create New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. Label the new layer 'Cloud Shape'. Select the Custom Shape tool (U) in the Toolbox (see Tip on the right). Go the Custom Shape picker in the Options bar to see a selection of shape thumbnails. Many are potential cloud shapes!

05 **Choose a shape** Click on the little triangle icon at the top right of the Custom Shape picker to open its menu. Scroll down the list of shape collections and choose Animals. In the next dialog window that pops up click OK to replace the default shapes with the Animal collection. Click on the Bird2 shape in order to select it.



06 **Draw your shape** Before you start to draw a shape, go to the far left of the Options bar and click on the Paths icon. You want to draw a path and not a filled vector shape. Make sure that the Cloud Shape layer is targeted in the Layers palette. Hold down Shift in order to constrain the shape, and drag the cursor to draw a bird-shaped path.

07 **Work path** Click on the Paths palette tab. A bird-shaped workpath will appear. Click on the little triangle icon at the top right of the Paths palette to open the menu, and pick Make Selection from the list of options. In the Make Selection dialog box set a Feather of 8 pixels to give your cloud shape a soft edge. Click OK.



Tip

Shift it

To save space, many of the tools are cruelly crammed into the same compartment in the Toolbox. This stops the Toolbox taking up valuable workspace. The Custom Shape tool mentioned in step 4 shares a single compartment with five other tools, and to add insult to injury they're all forced to share the same keyboard shortcut as well! By default the Rectangle tool is selected when you press U. In order to cycle through to the Custom Shape tool hold down Shift+U.

FILL THE SHAPE

Generate and manipulate your cloud texture

08 **Create cloud texture** Go back to the Layers palette and make sure the Cloud Shape layer is targeted. Press D to restore the foreground and background colours in the Toolbox to their default black and white. Now go to Filter>Render>Clouds. This will fill the bird-shaped marquee with a cloud-like texture. The marquee's feathered edge creates a soft outline.

09 **Blend and equalise** Set the Cloud Shape layer's blending mode to Screen. This makes the darker clouds become transparent, enabling blue sky to peep through parts of the shape from the layer below. Now go to Image>Adjustments>Equalize. This makes the blacks blacker and the whites whiter, creating more noticeable holes in the shape. These holes help break up the cloud shape.

10 **When the wind blows** Press Ctrl/Cmd+D to deselect the bird-shaped marquee. Now go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Set the Blur Angle to 36 and set a Distance of 18 pixels. Click OK to apply the Blur filter to the Cloud layer. This helps add a wind-blown look to the cloud texture, making it look less computer generated and more like a high altitude cloud formation. Finally, click OK.

Cloud spotting

Learn to tell your Cumulus from your Cumulonimbus

Like train spotters, cloud spotters know their stuff. While we may smile and point at clouds shaped like a cow/bird/angel etc, a seasoned cloud spotter will be able to tell us what type of cloud is creating our novelty shape, and even how many thousands of feet high the cloud is likely to be! Cloud formations are caused by a combination of factors, creating ten different types of cloud. Here's our guide to several of the cloud formations that you can try and mimic using the-cloud shaping techniques covered in our tutorial.

Cumulus

You can spot a fluffy Cumulus cloud floating to the left of our main image. These chaps don't have their head in the, er, clouds. They float around at a relatively low height – between 500 and 2,000 metres. Cumulus clouds tend to be isolated and dense, with a tall cauliflower-shaped top section. This makes them prime candidates for producing novelty-shaped clouds. They tend to be a brilliant white where the sun strikes them, with a darker under-belly. You can use the Burn tool with its Range option set to Highlights in order to darken the bottom of your CGI clouds.

Cirrus

These clouds are the highest in the cloud charts – they tend to float between 6,000 and a lofty 12,000 metres. As there's lots of wind at those altitudes Cirrus clouds get stretched quite thinly, becoming wispy strands of white. They tend to indicate that there's a change of weather on the way. Due to their wispy elongated nature, Cirrus clouds are less likely to produce an amusingly shaped cloud formation. For inspiration and education, float over to **www.cloudappreciationsociety.org**. There you'll find hundreds of beautiful clouds of all types, as well as a cool Cloud Lookalikes gallery featuring novelty cloud shapes.

Cumulonimbus

These large dense clouds tend to tower vertically, creating dramatic shapes. Like Cumulus clouds, they hang around between a low 500 to 2,000 metres. If you like exciting weather then these clouds are for you – when they show up they bring lightning due to a build-up of static electricity caused by erratic air movement. Cumulonimbus clouds occur when fluffy Cumulus clouds turn bad! In order to create a Cumulonimbus cloud you need lots of moisture and warm unstable air. Alternatively, you could try knocking one up in Photoshop by adapting our cloud-creating technique!

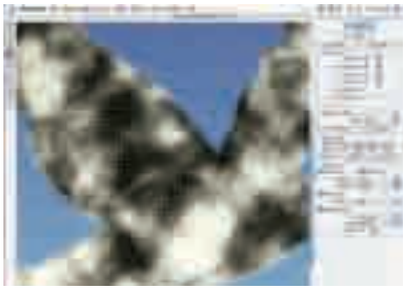
SHAPE UP

Use the Liquify filter to create a more three-dimensional cloud shape

11 Create volume Drag the Cloud Shape layer onto the Create a New Layer icon to duplicate it. At this stage our CGI cloud shape is too flat. To give it a more 3D volumetric shape, go to Filter>Liquify. Don't worry that you can see the black and greyscale pixels as well as the white. The Screen mode will hide these once you've liquified the layer.

12 Adjust the settings Select the Bloat tool (B) from the Liquify filter's mini toolbar. Go to the Tool Options section at the right of the filter's interface and drag the Brush Size up to 332. To make most of the brush tip area active, choose a high Brush Density value such as 88. To edit in subtle increments set Brush Pressure to 35.

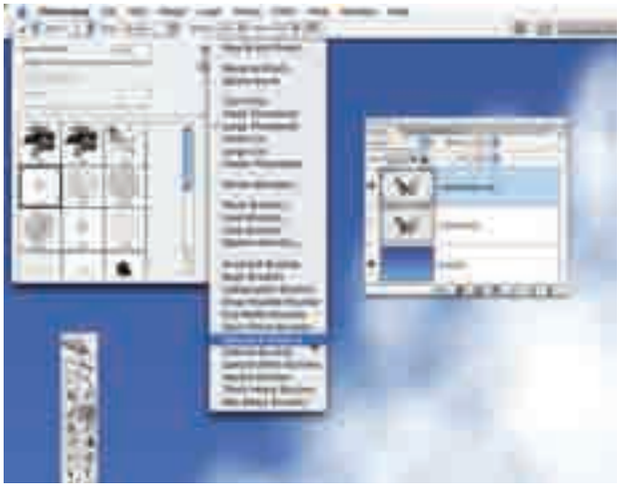
13 Edit the mesh In the filter's View Options section tick the Show Mesh box. This helps you see more clearly how the brush is altering the picture's pixels. By default the mesh is blue. As this clashes with our blue sky, use the Mesh Color drop-down menu to change the mesh to yellow. You're now ready to bloat!



14 Bloat the bird Test the edited Bloat tool by clicking once on some of the bird-shaped cloud's white pixels. They will swell up and become more three-dimensional. Click again on different parts of the cloud until you've given it more volume. Feel free to increase the brush size to cover larger areas and create a bit of variety.

15 Apply the filter If you get carried away with your bloating and the bird shape ceases to be recognisable, click Reconstruct to reduce the amount of distortion. Start from scratch by clicking Restore All. When you've finished bloating the cloud shape, click OK to apply the filter. Hide the original cloud layer by clicking its eye icon.

16 Choose your tip The edges of the cloud shape are too even and need to be broken up. Select the Brush tool (B) from the Toolbox. Go to the Brush Preset picker in the Options bar. Click on the triangle icon to open the palette menu and choose Natural Brushes 2. Use the Large Thumbnail option and select the Dry Brush 20 pixels thumbnail.



17 Modify the tip The brush tip is too uniform to create a natural cloud edge. Luckily we can rough it up and make it more 'rough and ready'. Click on the Brushes palette at the right of the Options bar. Click on the Shape Dynamics attribute and set Size Jitter to 72%. This creates a more organic looking texture. Click on Scattering and set it to 86%.

Tip

Repeat

In step 20 we show you how to twirl the edge of the cloud shape to create the effect of wind pulling the cloud apart. Once you've set up the Twirl filter's attributes, keep making elliptical marquee selections at different points around the edge of the shape and press Ctrl/Cmd+F in order to re-apply the filter. This is a quick and easy way to add a more realistic wind-buffeted outline to your computer-generated cloud shape.

Expert Tip

New hue

To make the CGI cloud shape mix more effectively with the real clouds in the source photos, you can give it a hint of colour. Target the Cloud Shape copy layer in the Layers palette. Go to Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation. Tick the Colorize box. Set Hue to around 40 and Saturation to 20. This warms up the darker parts of the CGI cloud and helps it stand out from the background.

STROKE IT

Stroke your modified brush tip around a path

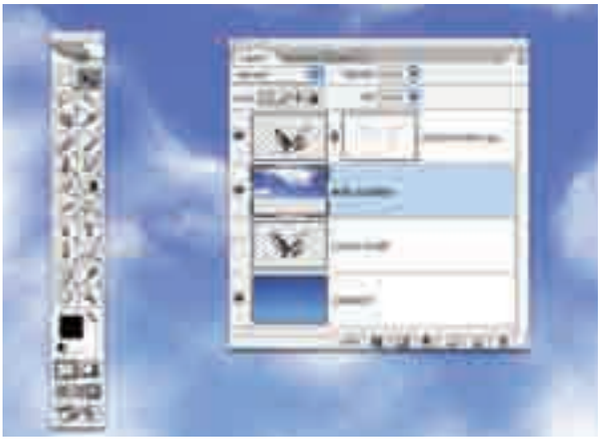
18 **Create a new path** Set the foreground colour in the Toolbox to black. Right/Ctrl-click on the Cloud Shape copy layer thumbnail and choose Select Layer Transparency. Now go to the Paths palette and choose Make Workpath from the Palette menu. This creates a new workpath around the modified bird shape. Click the Add Layer Mask icon at the bottom of the Layers palette.

19 **Stroke the path** Click on the layer mask, then go back to the Paths palette and choose Stroke Path. In the Stroke Path dialog window choose Brush. This will stroke the customised dry brush tip around the shape's outline. The edge of the shape will become partially transparent. Increase the Brush Diameter to 30 and stroke that through the path as well.

20 **Give us a twirl!** Cloud shapes have a short lifespan due to the wind. Select the Elliptical Marquee tool, set its Feather option to 11, then draw a circle around part of the cloud's edge. Go to Filter>Distort>Twirl. A value of 50% will mimic the effect of wind on the cloud edge. Now apply the Twirl filter to other parts of the shape.

21 **Mix and match**

Your cloud shape is ready to be set free against a real cloud backdrop. By mixing your CGI cloud with real clouds you help give it a sense of authenticity (like mixing a lie with a little bit of truth to 'sell' it!). Copy a photo of real clouds and paste them into the Cloud Shape document. Place the real clouds behind your Shape layer.

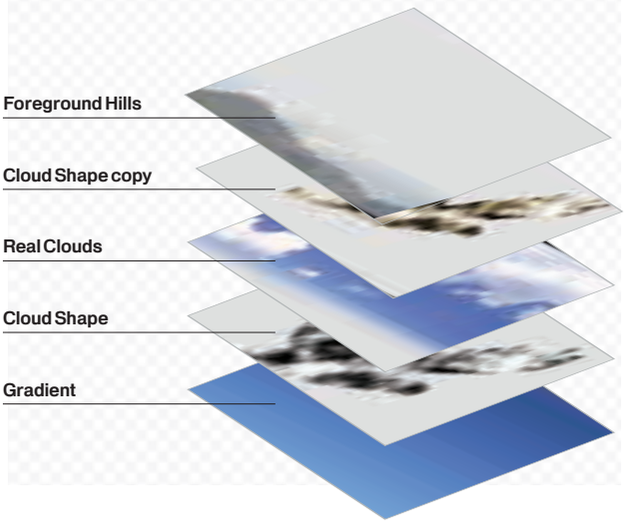


22 **Blend the horizon**

To soften the hard edge at the bottom of the Real Clouds layer, click the Add Layer Mask icon. Select the Gradient tool (G). Draw a black to white linear gradient on the mask to make the Real Clouds layer blend gently with the blue Gradient layer. You can use the same technique to add foreground detail like hills.

Layer structure

How we created the illusion



eMag

KEY SKILLS COVERED

What you'll learn

SEARCH ISTOCKPHOTO FOR SPECIFIC IMAGE LAYOUTS

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

Five minutes

YOUR EXPERT

Rosie Tanner

Using CopySpace

Get to grips with this great search tool from iStockphoto and hunt for images based on your specific page layout requirements

Using image banks for stock photography is part and parcel of any Photoshop user's regular routine, and we always welcome any tool designed to make the selection process easier. Many Photoshop projects rely as much as on empty space as they do on a specific image, which is what makes the CopySpace feature from iStockphoto so special.

How often do you have to work your design around an image rather than having the freedom to choose or play around with ideas? Having an image positioned to your requirements is always a huge bonus and gives you greater flexibility in your design. Getting creative with Photoshop should mean having the freedom to let your ideas flow without interruption. Thankfully, being dictated by image positioning is a frustration that can now be avoided, and we're here to show you how it's done.

Designed to give you the option of where you want the space to be, CopySpace is a valuable timesaving device. Although this search tool is only available to iStockphoto, it doesn't mean your choice of images is restricted. This is one of the largest image banks worldwide, hosting a multitude of photographs, vector illustrations and Flash files. All images are royalty-free and there are no subscription costs – which is always a bonus.

So if you're ready to find your perfect fit picture, read on to see exactly how you can track it down.

WORKS WITH | FEATURE ONLY AVAILABLE ON **WWW.ISTOCKPHOTO.COM**

COPYSPACE CADETS

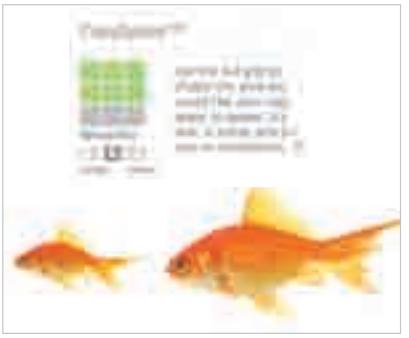
Locate perfectly positioned pictures in a flash

01 Search options First off, log onto **istockphoto.com** where you will find the home page. Ignore the main search bar and go to the bottom right of the page where you will find the Navigate options. Select Advanced Search from the list.

CopySpace™
Use the 3x3 grid to choose the area you would like your copy space to appear. It's real, it works, and it's only on iStockphoto.
Sensitivity

02 Facing the grid The Advanced Search page is made up of various sections. You'll find the CopySpace feature on the far right-hand side, halfway down. Here you will see a 3 x 3 grid, which will act as your main search device.

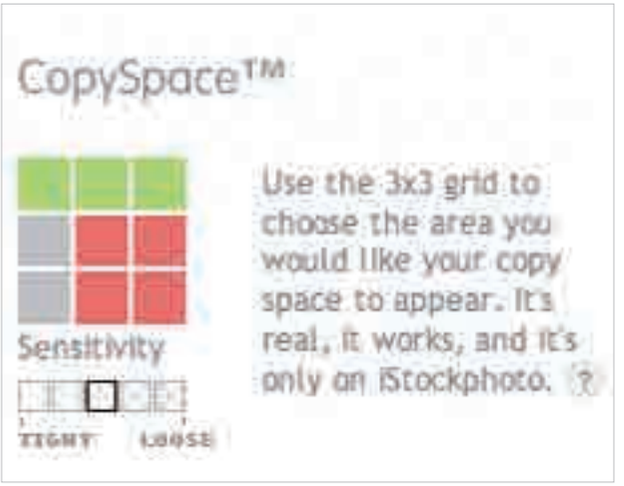
03 Wide open space Each square within the grid can be clicked on and it will change colour. Click a square once and it will turn green, indicating where on the picture you want the free space to be. You can click as many or as few squares as you wish, in any particular order.



04 Keep yourself occupied There's also an option to choose which part of the image should be occupied with an object. Click each square twice for it to turn red. Any square you leave grey indicates you have no preference as to whether the space is filled or not.

05 Choose your words carefully As with any image bank, you need to specify what kind of image you are looking for. Simply type your desired subject matter into the Keywords bar and hit the Search button. To refine your search you can select a specific file type such as Image or Illustration, and also specify the size by entering your desired dimensions in pixels.

06 Sensitive types iStock is a vast source for imagery, so some searches may throw up a whole host of images barely related to your requirements. If you're looking for something very specific, use the Sensitivity scale under the 3 x 3 grid and set it to Tight. If you want a wider search, setting Sensitivity to Loose will give you a broader range of images to choose from.


CopySpace™
Use the 3x3 grid to choose the area you would like your copy space to appear. It's real, it works, and it's only on iStockphoto.
Sensitivity
TIGHT
LOOSE

Additional features

Searching by colour

Another search option is to locate images based on their colour. Every image within the iStockphoto bank automatically has a colour profile, so you can be very specific in your searches. This function is just above the CopySpace feature and can be used in conjunction with CopySpace or as a standalone tool. You can perform a simple colour search by clicking on a colour, or choose from the RGB or HSV palettes below the search bar.

Tip

Image rights

All the images on iStockphoto are classed as royalty-free, which means you pay for the image once only, rather than having to pay a licence for additional uses. Remember, you're still bound by the agreed terms for every time you subsequently use the image, so be sure you are in accordance with these terms before publishing any work.

FOCUS ON HISTOGRAM

Histogram

The histogram is a fantastic tool for information about what's going on with our tones

The tones in our images are given a number by Photoshop according to their luminosity (lightness or darkness), with 0 being the darkest tone and 255 the lightest.

All of our images are made up of three coloured channels (red, green and blue), and each tone has a luminosity value in each channel. Pure red, for instance, has values of 255 in the red channel and 0 in both of the others, whereas pure white has 255 in all three. What the histogram does is represent the entire range of tones within the image in the form of a graph, with the furthest left point representing 0 (darkest) and the furthest right point representing 255 (lightest).

For ultimate accuracy we can choose to view a histogram for each colour channel, but a histogram that combines the readings of the three is easier to work with. The amount of a particular tone in an image is indicated by the height of information on the histogram at that point – so high amounts of information in the centre of a histogram, for example, would indicate that the image featured a lot of tones in the midtone region.

A healthy histogram should taper off at both ends – if you have high levels of information at either endpoint, there's a good chance you've over or underexposed your image, turning important highlight detail into pure white or shadow detail into pure black.

Low contrast Observe the same image with a low contrast treatment from Adobe Camera Raw. The information is centred in the histogram so there's little in the way of shadow or highlight tones. As our image naturally contains these tones, it leaves the scene looking rather flat.

Overexposed This version of the image is overexposed. You can see that the information favours the right side of the histogram despite the scene containing a fairly even spread of tones. It doesn't taper fully down at the edge either, suggesting highlight information has been clipped. Look closely at the lightest areas and you'll see a loss of detail.

Reading your image

The histogram should reflect the scene

A histogram with tones to the left or right doesn't necessarily mean your image is under or overexposed, as long as the tones taper down at the very edge. If you were photographing a black cat in a coal cellar, for example, you'd be expecting to find histogram info on the left side and should adjust Levels accordingly if this isn't so. A snowman in a snow-covered scene should produce tones on the right side. A perfectly balanced histogram with information from left to right isn't always the best scenario then – the histogram should reflect the original scene.

Shooting to the right

Keep tones to the right to minimise noise

While you'd expect a scene with dark tones to produce a left-biased histogram, it's better to 'overexpose' first then darken the tones afterwards in Adobe Camera Raw or with Levels. Digicam sensors record the most info at the highlight end, so you risk introducing noise into shadows by capturing a dark scene as it was intended in-camera. This technique is commonly used by pros to get the best image quality. Be very careful not to overexpose to the point where highlights are clipped to pure white.

Good contrast We edited this image at the Raw stage to show a perfect range of tones right across the histogram. As the scene naturally contains dark shadows and lighter highlights, it suits this sort of high contrast treatment – the colours are really accentuated.

Underexposed This version of the image is underexposed. The information is clumped at the left end despite the original scene displaying a full range of tones. However, it does taper down fully at the edge suggesting that shadow detail hasn't been clipped.

Tip

Updating the histogram

Photoshop's histogram doesn't always fully update to reflect changes you make with adjustments such as Levels or Curves, because constant automatic updates could potentially slow the program down. If you see an exclamation mark inside the Histogram window, the histogram isn't accurately reflecting your changes. Click that exclamation mark to manually update the histogram.

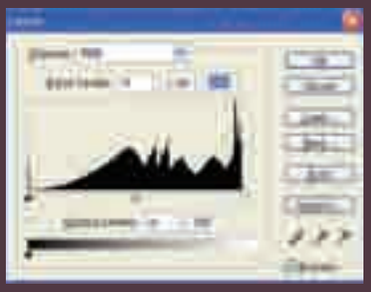
Using Levels

Rearrange the tones in your image

A Levels adjustment allows you to make tones lighter or darker, or ensure a full contrast range by setting the darkest shadow to 0 and lightest highlight to 255.

01 Altering the gamma By moving the middle grey slider left, you shift the tonal info on a histogram rightwards, lightening the tones in an image. By moving it right, you shift the tonal info leftwards and darken the tones.

02 Setting the black point If info on a histogram doesn't reach the left edge, the image does not have the darkest of shadow tones. To get the full range, move the black slider rightwards to meet the info edge (but not past the edge).



03 Setting the white point If info on a histogram doesn't reach the right edge, the image does not have the lightest of highlight tones. To get the full range, move the white slider leftwards to meet the info edge (but not past the edge).

Camera histogram

Judge exposure in-camera

Your digicam provides a histogram to help judge exposure. If info doesn't taper at an edge, you've over or underexposed and will need to correct the exposure settings and re-shoot. But bear in mind that the histogram is based on the JPEG setting – if you're shooting Raw you can find highlight info where the histogram showed it as clipped.

Expansion/compression

Work in 16-bit mode to preserve quality

When you make changes to your tonal range using Curves or Levels you will be expanding or compressing that information. Expansion will show up as gaps or white lines in your histogram, while compression will show up as spiked black lines. If excessive, this expansion or compression can cause our images to visibly degrade in quality. Working with 16-bit rather than 8-bit images reduces the impact of expansion and compression, giving us more room to make changes without noticeable effects.

Tip

Experiment

You don't always have to adjust an image so it appears as the eye sees it. Try darkening a scene to create a mood, or lightening it to give a bright high-key feel.

Create a photo composite

Elevate the humble photo montage by giving it an ethereal watercolour look. Luckily, Photoshop has all the tools you need

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
40 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Stewart Michael Bruce

ON THE CD
Source files

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- WATERCOLOUR EFFECTS
- CREATING A BACKGROUND
- USING BLENDING MODES

This tutorial is going to show you how to give your sharp, digital illustration a fresh, fine arts look, merging traditional techniques with the wonders of Photoshop.

The technical goal of this project is to create an illustration without ever going to the Filter palette. Instead, we'll work in the Layers palette and utilise the various blending modes.

Before you begin any project like this, it's always important to do a rough sketch of your illustration. This will give you a good idea of what photos you need to take and where. Also think about the kind of background you'd like, and then break out the watercolours, acrylics, oils, charcoal or pencils and create it. Incorporating a scanned painted background in your illustration adds a more organic feel and can create different moods too. You may find the image doesn't hold together until the very end when the last background is added. Then the whole illustration will fall into place.

The best way to achieve a watercolour look to an illustration is to get out your paintbrush and watercolour paper. You could use the Filter palette, but a 'real' watercolour background – however simple – provides much more of a fine art feel to an image. Sometimes a nice light watercolour wash or a fully painted background is best, depending on the effect you're looking for in your illustration.

We've included all the files you need on the cover CD, and you may like to incorporate the painted backgrounds in other projects.

When it comes to using colours, keeping to a uniformed palette can highlight the theme of your image and avoid the message getting lost in a cacophony of hues. Keeping the colour palette to a single colour or colour family will ensure the image remains in focus. Remember, looking to unconventional sources can be very rewarding when it comes to colour choice. To achieve the natural feel of the wash of colour in this piece, we scanned in a piece of wood veneer bought from a craft shop. Using the colours from this three-dimensional object produced a colour palette with a depth that a sepia filter could not achieve: it would have rendered the colours of the image too flat. Also, this method conveniently keeps the wash all within the same colour family.

Tip

Using layers

Photoshop is the best program for working in layers. Its easy layer management keeps your elements well organised within your working space. Also, there's the welcome magic of layer sets that will help you organise the images within the Layer palette. It's extremely important not to merge your images when working on your project. Once the layers are merged, they cannot be undone, which is rather inconvenient if you want to tweak and polish them up at a later date!

CREATE A BACKGROUND

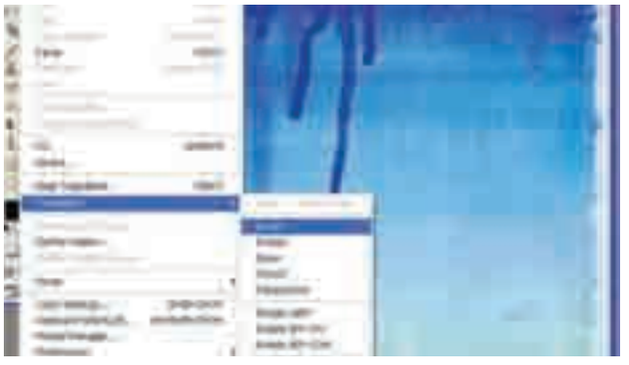
Assemble your images

01 Painted ladies It's great fun to paint your own backgrounds, plus it adds a fine art feel to your illustration. Also, a painted background adds the illusion of a watercolour without going to the Filter palette. One of the best things about working this way is that you can create a perfect landscape for your illustration then add it to your photomontage.

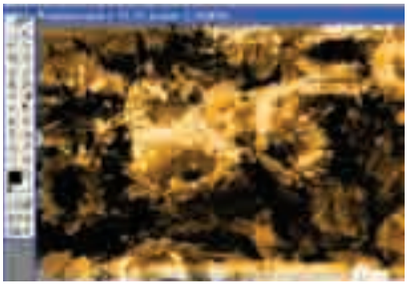
02 Keeping it real A view of Big Ben taken from the London Eye. For this illustration, we scanned in all of the 35mm film shot on location in London and then imported the pictures into Photoshop. All the photography was taken on a 35mm Canon EOS 10 with a Canon Lens EF 28 -200mm 1:4-55 Ultrasonic.

03 On the South Bank This photograph was taken on the South Bank looking towards the bridge at Waterloo Station. We took lots of photographs of the river and of the surrounding buildings because we needed good strong images to go with the London Eye. Luckily its surrounding landscape worked well.

04 Bullseye Because the London Eye was going to be the main focal point, we took well over 20 images of it from all angles and perspectives – inside the cars, looking over London from the top, the cars above and below, and also views of the London Eye from the ground.



05 Getting started Open up Photoshop and create a new workspace that's 28cm wide, 21cm high and at 300ppi. Open up the 'painted 02' file from the CD and scale it to fit the new window. If you have one, use a graphics tablet – it's a must-have device when it comes to working in Photoshop.

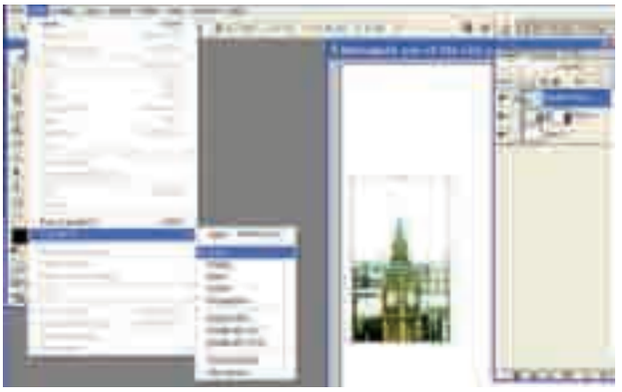


06 Vary the background Open 'Flower Background', 'Painted 03' and 'Painted 04' from the CD. Drag and drop the backgrounds into the main window and then scale them to fit to your new creation. Creating original backgrounds can add an organic edge to your illustration, such as giving a watercolour look to your work.

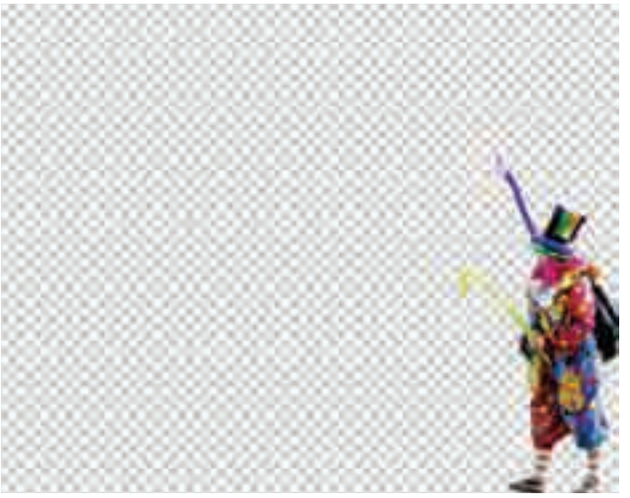
07 All images together Open 'Big Ben', 'Clown 2', 'London Eye', 'London River' and 'Mercedes' from the CD and place each on its own named layer to help keep things organised. Place Clown 2 in the bottom right-hand corner of the canvas, London Eye in the top-right corner, Big Ben and Mercedes on the left side, and place London River at the bottom of the canvas. Scale each element individually.

BEHIND THE MASK
Add a touch of finesse

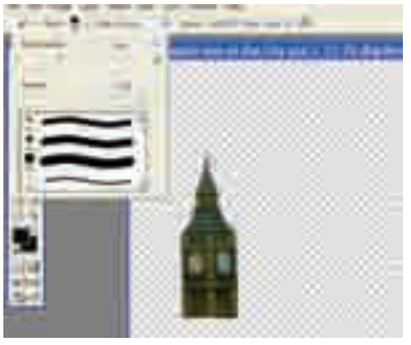
08 **Transform your image** Use Photoshop CS's Free Transform tool to adjust all the layers to the main canvas's width and height. Scale and adjust the layers, taking advantage of the handy numerical control within this tool.



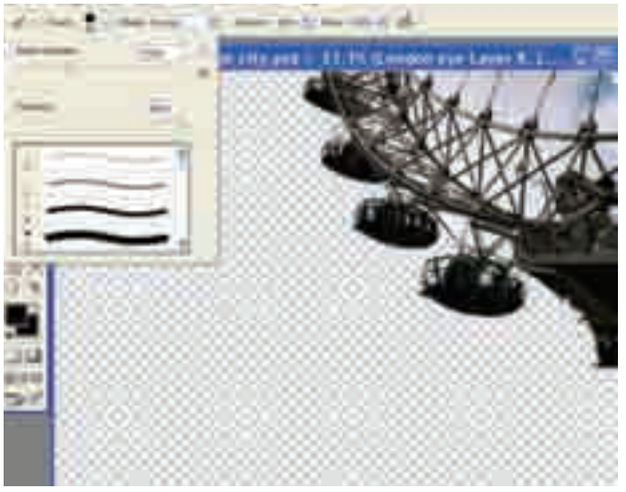
09 **Going under the mask** Now to tackle the Mask tool. Select it from the Layers palette, and with the Brush tool slowly take away the background, taking care that the background is black in the toolbar. If you need to replace the element that you have just removed, the background should be white. You should end up with just the clown.



10 **Working that brush** The Mask tool is the perfect example of why a graphics tablet and pen come in very handy. You have much finer control using a pen than you would with a mouse, and you will find the task of erasing each element of the picture much easier.



11 **Big Ben** Click on the Big Ben layer, open up the Mask tool, and repeat the same process. Switch off all the other elements and slowly clean up unwanted elements. You should end up with a sole image of Big Ben's clock tower.



12 **London Eye** With London Eye open, select the Mask tool on the Layers palette and start to erase only around the cars, leaving the sky top-right intact. It's worth taking your time over this as you are erasing very small elements from this image. Use a small brush for this job.

The power of masks
Use them to their full potential

One of the benefits of working with the Mask tool over the Lasso tool is that you can continue to add or remove elements from your images and change the opacity using the Painting mode. However, when you're working with the Mask tool, it's difficult to eliminate all the background elements in the first pass. As much as you try to get rid of the unwanted elements, you will always miss some. The best way to get over this problem is to add a new layer at the bottom of the Layers palette and add a white background to it. When working on the mask element of your images, switch on this white background layer. This will show where there are still little pockets of areas that need to be dealt with. Go back into the Mask layer and remove all traces of the images. This is just good housekeeping.

BLEND THE ELEMENTS

Using modes to artistic effect

Going further afield

Corel Painter

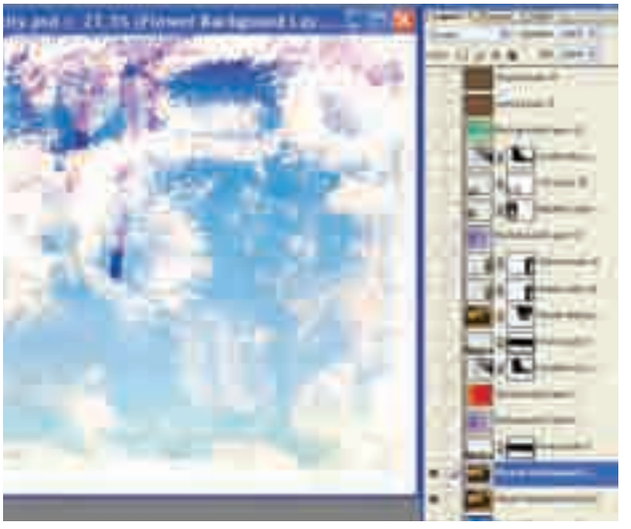
Photoshop is a great program for creating fantastic photomontages. It has loads of features to help you create just the image you want: all-new brushes and new filters, such as Extract, Filter Gallery, Liquefy, Pattern Maker and lots more. However, it's good to diversify your tools – remember that there are other applications you can try. One of those applications is Corel Painter, now in version X. With this program you have all the tools you would find in an art shop, including oils, watercolours, pens, inks and pencils, and many more materials at your fingertips. Spend some time creating subtle backgrounds in Painter and then export them straight into Adobe Photoshop to incorporate into your illustration.

13 On the river Now open up London River from the Layers palette. Erase the sky and cut back to the buildings. Once you are happy you can start to erase around the edge. Feel free to polish or tweak more if you need to – the idea is to reveal one of the watercolour backgrounds to give a soft edge.

14 Blend in Set the blending mode for each layer.; switch each one on. Set London River and London Eye to Darken with Opacity 100%. Set the Clown and Mercedes layers to Lighten at 100% Opacity. Set Big Ben to Hard Light at 100% Opacity. Copy the Clown layer, place above the lighter layer and change to Darken, 100% Opacity. Copy the London Eye layer and change to Hue, Opacity 43%.

15 Using the Lasso tool If you want to, you can always use the Lasso tool instead of the Mask tool. Photoshop usually has multiple ways of achieving the same effect, so try them all out in order to find the one that you prefer.

16 Lay down the background So you've worked on the photographs and got them all into position. The next step is to switch the backgrounds back on. Scale the file 'Flower' (from the CD) to fit the working window and set the blending mode to Screen at 100% Opacity.



17 Duplicate the Flower Background layer Your next step is to duplicate the Flower Background layer. This makes the whole thing much lighter. Now set the blending mode to Screen with Opacity set at 100%.

LAYER HOUSEKEEPING

Keep things in order

18 **Layers...** We are slowly building up the layers as we go along. Switch on the London River layer and set the blending mode to Darken and the Opacity to 100%..

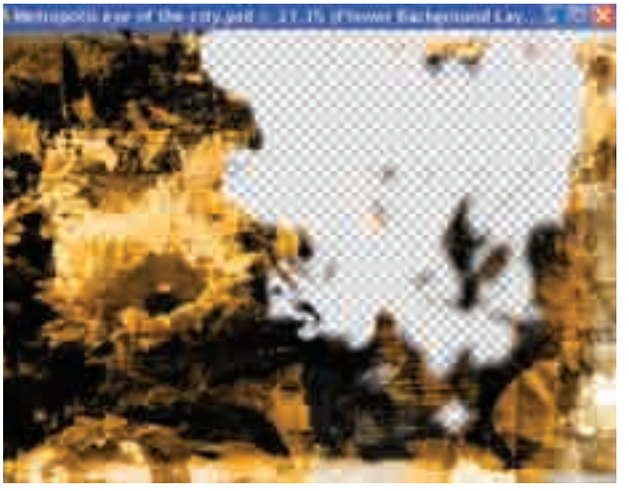
19 **...and more layers** Add 'Painted Background 04' from the CD and drop the background on top of the London River layer. Set it to Overlay at 100% Opacity.

20 **Adding a special touch to the illustration** The next step is to add 'Painted Background 03' from the CD. First we add this layer on top of Painted Background 04 as Layer 7 and then set the blending mode to Overlay at 100% Opacity.

21 **Eye to eye** Open the London Eye layer and reposition the image in the top right-hand corner of the canvas. Set the blending mode to Overlay at 100% Opacity.

22 **Over the river** Next, select the London River layer and duplicate it. Add this layer above the London Eye layer and change the blending mode to Darken and the Opacity to 100%.

23 **Reveal the eye** Duplicate the Flower Background layer. Make it Layer 10 and set the blending mode to Screen at 100% Opacity. Go to the Mask tool and take away the background to reveal the London Eye, keeping the original colour of each element.



24 **Cutting the flowers** Using the Mask tool, take away as much of the Flower Background as you need to reveal the background of the London Eye. Cut right up to the cars on the wheel. This leaves the London Eye as it was before.

Tip

Your source files

For this project, we used both an SLR and a digital camera. Most of the photographs were taken with an SLR Canon 10 with a 28 -200mm lens. One of the drawbacks of working with an SLR camera is the time aspect – having to get the film processed and scanned in takes time, which can be a real hindrance if you have a client who needs a project done 'yesterday.' As long as you take enough photographs in the first place you should be fine; however, you may find yourself having to go back to take more photographs. This is where a digital camera comes in handy. With a digital camera you can delete images as you go along, download the files as soon as you get back to your computer and begin work immediately. Instant results at the touch of a button!

SEND IN THE CLOWNS

An extra element

25 **Clowning around** Select the Clown layer, switch it back on and place the image on the bottom left-hand corner of the canvas. Now set the blending mode to Lighten and the Opacity to 100%.

26 **Double take** Next, select the Clown layer and then duplicate it. This will enhance the effect. Now change the blending mode to Darken at 100% Opacity.

27 **Add texture to your images** Duplicate the Background 04 layer and then add it to the top of the Layers palette. Set the Opacity at 100%. We are slowly building up the layers – the image changes each time we add a new background.

28 **Big Ben** Now you need to go to the Layers palette, select the Big Ben layer and place it at the bottom left-hand corner of the main image. Set the blending bode to Hard Light and give it 100% Opacity.

29 **Looking at the texture** As you can see, the texture of the buildings begins to look as if you have digitally applied a watercolour effect, but you've only really used the Layers palette. Learning this technique gives you more control over your image and prevents you from becoming too dependent on Photoshop's built-in effects.

STILL MORE ELEMENTS

Less certainly isn't more!

30 Mercedes Select the Mercedes layer and place it in front of Big Ben (but feel free to experiment with the placement of the elements within the main canvas). Set the blending mode in the Layers palette to Lighten and the Opacity to 100%.

31 Double your image Select the London Eye layer and duplicate the image. Add London Eye to the top of the Mercedes layer. Now edit the layer mask and then set the blending mode of the layer to Hue and the Opacity to 43%.

32 Adjust the colour To bring out more colour, select Background 1 and then set the blending mode to Hard Light and the Opacity to 30%. You can see how we are slowly building up the colours and layers to get the effect that we want for this illustration.

33 Use organic materials Open the 'Wood background.jpg' file on the CD and place it at the top of the layer stack. Set the blending mode to Saturation and the Opacity to 100%. This begins to pull the image together because it uses shades of one colour family.

34 The final touches to the illustration Duplicate the Wood layer and add it to the top of the Layers palette. Set the blending mode of the layer to Hue and the Opacity to 100%. Adding the second layer to the illustration changed the feel from muddy and confused to clear and focused.

Other creative options Trade secrets

The London Tube image pictured below, was created in much the same way as this tutorial illustration. Hand-painted backgrounds were added for a watercolour effect, which gave this digital image of modern transportation a bit of a traditional, fine art feel.

It can be difficult to set just the right mood and to communicate the emotion of a piece of artwork to its viewers without losing them in the image itself. Finding the right colour palette to enhance what you're trying to get across is a very fine balancing act. Working with opposite colours can give you an interesting contrast of mood, which can help convey some complex emotions. Similarly, if you have only one point that you want to make, then don't be afraid to just concentrate on one type of colour. If you wanted to convey anger, for example, a mixture of red tones will help contribute to the overall feeling.

ArtStudioPro Volume 2

Apply realistic paint effects to photos with the help of this powerful plug-in

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
10 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Jo Cole

Regular readers may remember that we featured ArtStudioPro back in issue 15, and we were thoroughly impressed with the results it gave. We were therefore delighted to hear that Twisting Pixels had released a new version of the plug-in with even more tempting functionality and artistic possibilities.

ArtStudioPro Volume 2 builds upon the effects available with the first version, but brings some new ones to the party as well. These new styles cover chalk, charcoal and finger paint effects, but the most exciting are the oil options. With these you can build up a very convincing oil painting effect, especially if you use the bundled paper textures for the final touch of realism.

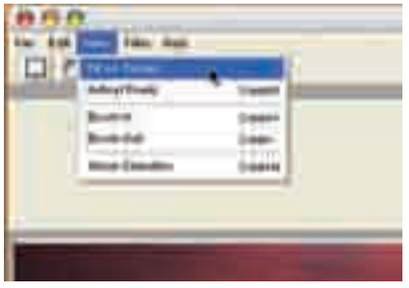
The plug-in boasts a Layers palette that works pretty much the same as Photoshop's one, and allows you to control the final effect even more by applying different types of strokes on different layers. By doing this you can work as a real artist would – gradually building up layers of brush strokes until you get the level of detail you want. You can also bring back detail from the original photo and mix photography with art effects.

We're going to create a very simple painting here, using the new oil paint options. You can see how you only need a few short steps to turn a photo into a work of art, but you can also spend far longer on the process and really stretch your imagination.

To find out more about the plug-in pop over to **www.twistingpixels.com**, or see the box on page 73 and take advantage of our special discount offer.

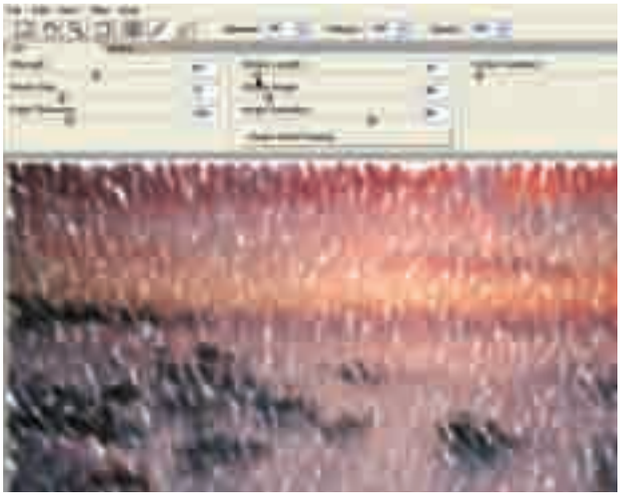
TWIST PHOTOS INTO ARTWORK

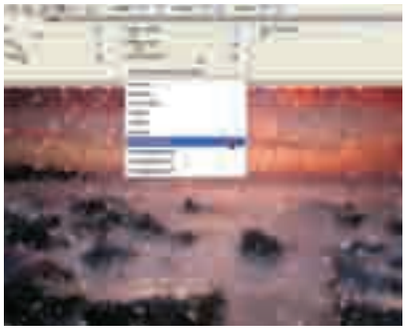
Apply an oil effect quickly and easily



01 Unleash the plug-in Once you've installed the plug-in, make sure the folder is in the Photoshop Plugins folder. Load a photo into Photoshop and then go to Filter>Twisting Pixels>ArtStudioPro. A new dialog window will open with your image and the controls. Go to View>Fit on Screen to make sure you can see your entire photo.

02 The first strokes
Go to Filter>Oil>Oil and some strokes will be applied to your photo. Sliders will also appear near the top of the interface that allow you to control these strokes. To start, we adjust the Stroke Length to make them a bit shorter.





03 New layer Click the New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette and your painted layer will be duplicated. This allows you to build up detail. Click the Stroke Style button to see more options. We picked HalfCircle Random to make things less 'dabby'.

04 Detail You can build upon the preset layer options to help with your image. Click on Presets at the top of the Layers palette. Click on a look and it will be applied to your photo. You can then tweak it by adding more layers and setting the style.

05 Paper texture Once you are happy with the brush strokes, it's time to make things even more realistic by adding a paper texture. Do this by going to Filter>PaperTexture. You can access more textures by clicking on the Bumpmap button and then picking one.

06 Paper tweaks
To adjust the texture, use the Bumpmap Strength and Bumpmap Scale sliders to control how intense and large the texture appears. Also use the Light Source control to decide where you want the light to come from. Now click the magnifying glass icon and zoom into the bottom-left area.

07 Sign your work Go to Filter>Manual Tools>Oil Brush. We're going to use this to sign our name. Click the black square to choose a contrasting colour and then pick a suitable brush size from the Diameter field. Sign your name and then hit Apply to return to Photoshop and save your work.

Save on ArtStudioPro!

We've teamed up with the lovely people over at Twisting Pixels to offer *Photoshop Creative* readers a 20% discount when ordering ArtStudioPro Volume 2. Simply head over to the online shop at **www.twistingpixels.com** and enter the following code when ordering: **PSCRTV**. This will entitle you to a 20% discount on the $99.95 selling price. Please note this offer terminates on 12 May 2007.

Advice

Visit the advice centre for help with fixing photos, solutions to your image-editing problems and directions to helpful destinations on the web

Your expert panel…

GEORGE CAIRNS
A Photoshop user for many years, George can tackle any problem

ROSIE TANNER
Looking for some helpful web resources? Rosie can guide you to them

JO COLE
Jo's a big fan of saving as much time as possible, and is your guide to shortcuts

What you'll find in this section

Q+A
Get to the bottom of your image-editing woes in this part

PHOTOFIX
Send us your problem shots for advice on making them all better

RESOURCES
We guide you to the best websites for tutorials and instruction in using the Photoshop software

Send your questions to…

Post you questions to *Photoshop Creative* Q&A, Imagine Publishing Ltd, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ.

Alternatively you can email us at **PCR@imagine-publishing.co.uk**.

Q+A

Let us sort out your image-editing quandaries

Machine gun fire

Q I'm trying to turn a shot taken in a museum into a scene from a war movie. How can I add realistic machine gun fire to a source photo? I've tried painting in bursts of flame using the Brush tool, but the result just looks too 'hand drawn'. Any brush tip tips?
John Langford

A Bit of a challenge there, Johnny old chap – but nothing our technical boffins can't solve with a bit of tinkering under Photoshop's bonnet. Here are some tips and techniques to help you modify Photoshop brush tips and create the machine gun effect you're after.

Open your source file. Select the Brush tool by pressing 'B'. From the Brush Preset picker choose a soft round brush tip. We'll soon have it looking more like a burst of machine gun fire.

Take that! Create dramatic bursts of weapons fire by tweaking some of the many attributes in the Brushes palette

Pop your cursor up to the Brushes Palette icon at the top right of the Options bar and give it a click. Here's where the main action will happen! At the bottom of the Brushes palette you'll see a preview of the type of smooth soft stroke the brush will produce. It won't look much like a burst of gunfire to start with. To turn the smooth stroke into a more dotted intermittent line, click on the words 'Brush Tip Shape'. You can then drag the Spacing slider to around 178% to place gaps between the tip as it draws. To turn the round brush tip into a more bullet-shaped oval, go to the Set Brush Angle and Roundness icon and drag a selection handle to squash it. This will help create a sense of bullets whizzing past.

For added realism you'll want the burst of flame to start off larger near the gun muzzle and trail off in size. To make it shrink as you draw, click on Shape Dynamics. Set the Control drop-down menu to Fade and then type in a value of 15 in the Fade option's field. The brush stroke preview will now show the tips getting smaller.

At this stage the brush tip will look too smooth. Rough it up a little by clicking on the Texture option in the Brushes palette. The options on the right of the palette will change to let you tinker with the tip's texture. Click on the Pattern picker and choose the greyscale Molecular pattern. This will help break up the brush tips in each stroke and add a more 'rough and ready' texture. Set the texture's mode to Overlay.

Tip

Everyone always says about organising your photos, but what about organising them into reference libraries? Here at *Photoshop Creative*, we have special folders for types of images (skyscapes, sea, buildings, etc) so that when we need a photo for a certain task, it's really easy to find the ones available. It saves a lot of time!

Tool presets

Save your modified brush tips

In our first question above, we spent a considerable amount of time altering attributes in the Brushes palette to create a burst of machine gun fire. If you close Photoshop you'll lose the fruits of your labour unless you save the edited brush tip. In order to do this, first move the cursor to the top left of the Options bar and then click on the Tool Preset picker icon. Now click on the Create New Tool Preset icon. In the New Tool Preset dialog which opens, type in a suitable name for your brush. Finally, tick the Include Color box so that you don't need to worry about resetting the foreground and background colours to yellow and orange.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Tool shortcuts

	PC	N	Mac	N
Audio Annotation tool				
Eyedropper tool				
Color Sampler tool				
Measure tool				

The next thing to do is create a colour for your burst of machine gun fire. Click on the Toolbox's Foreground Color icon and choose an orange from the Color picker, and a yellow for the background. Pop back to the Brushes palette and click on the Color Dynamics option. Set the Foreground/Background Jitter slider to 100%. This will mix between the foreground and background colours when you draw, adding more variety to the stroke.

You're nearly ready to open fire, but fingers off the trigger for the moment. Click on the Noise option in the Brushes palette. This adds a rough edge to your brush tips, which you can blur later to add movement and texture to the burst of machine gun fire.

Okay chaps – fingers on triggers. Click on the Create a New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. Label the new layer 'Burst 1'. Click to place the first burst of muzzle fire next to the weapon in the source file. Hold Shift and move the cursor to the other side of the document. Click again and Photoshop will join the two points together with a dramatic burst of machine gun fire that automatically scales down as it moves away from the gun's muzzle.

To make the gun fire's colours interact with the background texture, set the Burst 1 layer's blending mode to Color Dodge. Build up the effect by creating a new layer called Burst 2. Increase the brush size a tad and create another burst of gunfire. Set this new layer's blending mode to Vivid Light and it will mix dramatically with the previous layers. Create a third layer and spray a white brush tip on that to create a white-hot core for the gunfire.

To add more movement and energy to the burst of gunfire, select each brush layer in turn and go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Blur the fire in the direction the bullets should be going. A value of 77 pixels should do the trick!

As a finishing touch, add a little interactive lighting. Create a new layer and Edit>Fill it with 50% grey. Go to Filter>Render>Lens Flare and choose a 105mm Prime flare. Click OK to apply the filter. By setting the grey layer's blending mode to Pin Light the grey layer will vanish, leaving the flare intact. You can then use the Move tool to reposition the flare anywhere you like.

Pick and mix

Q **I've taken a series of snapshots of my family, and as to be expected, some folk look good in certain shots but have their eyes closed in others! There's no single photo where everyone's looking his or her best. What's the easiest way to combine shots to create the perfect family portrait? I don't fancy cutting out people from different shots and pasting them into a single photo.**
Emma Hampton

A If you're shooting groups then it's well worth flicking your camera to Sports mode so that you can blast off a series of shots in quick succession. This will give you the opportunity to get a decent shot

Impress your friends

Share your brush tips

If it has taken you forever to create a specialist brush tip (such as our machine gun fire example above) then why not share it with your friends? You can experiment with different weapon effects (or create and share magical sprinkles of fairy dust if you're less war-like). Label and store the creative brush tip as a tool preset (see the tip at the bottom of the previous page). Click the little arrow icon at the top right of the Tool Preset palette in order to get a menu, then scroll down to the Save Tool Presets option. This saves all of the presets in the palette in one go. You will then be able to mail the entire preset file to your mates.

FOOTPRINTS

Create prints in the snow

Q **I'm working on a snow scene and I want a close-up shot of a boot footprint in the snow. How can I create the footprint in the snow picture I have?**
Mark Abbey

A Start off by putting the boot in! Stick your shoe on a flatbed scanner – although do take it off first to avoid cracking the glass! By scanning a boot or shoe you'll capture a richly textured source image which you can then transform and blend in order to create a convincing snowy footprint.

01 **Cut it out** Once the shoe is scanned, cut it out. It need not be a perfect selection, as you'll blend the shoe to create a footprint. Grab the Magnetic Lasso and quickly draw around the shoe. Go to Layer>New> Layer Via Copy in order to isolate it from the scanned background.

02 **Blend it** Open a suitably snowy source file and add the shoeprint to the file on a separate layer. If the snow shot is taken at an angle, use Edit>Transform> Perspective to get the scanned shoe to match the image's perspective. Set the shoeprint's blending mode to Overlay.

03 **Bevel it** Click the Add a Layer Style icon. Tick Bevel & Emboss; set Style to Emboss and Technique to Chisel Soft. Tick the Direction Down button. Drag the Depth slider to 380% to create a boot-shaped indentation. Experiment with the Size slider to emphasise its bevelled edge.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Tool shortcuts

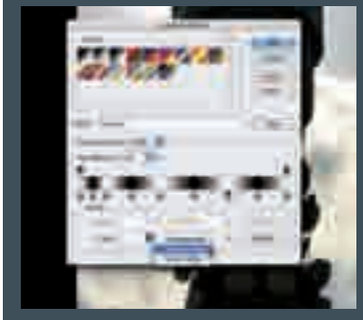
	PC	Mac
Hand tool	H	H
Zoom tool	Z	Z
Default Foreground/Background colours	D	D
Switch Foreground/Background colours	X	X

ENERGY WAVES

Creatively modify the Gradient tool

Q **I'm trying to create the effect of wi-fi transmissions emanating from a central point. How can I create ever-widening circles radiating outwards? It's for a poster, so I don't mind it looking stylised.**
Will Hampton

A You could try drawing a series of circles using the Elliptical Marquee tool (M) and then stroking these with a texture, but with a bit of tinkering in the Gradient Editor you can create a radio wave-style gradient that you can reuse in future projects to generate radiating circles in **seconds.**



01 **Extra stops** Set the foreground colour to black and the background to white. Grab the Gradient tool, click the Gradient Editor. Pick the Foreground to Background gradient and add colour stops. Set the stops to alternate between black and white. Hit OK.

02 **Change hue** Click Radial Gradient; draw a straight line to create some circles. Set that layer's blending mode to Screen, so the black sections are transparent and the whites visible. In Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation tick Colorize to add colour to the edges.

03 **New layer** Intensify the transmission by dragging the gradient layer to the Create a New Layer icon to copy it. Set its blending mode to Overlay. This gives the 'radio waves' more impact. Experiment by adding new gradient layers and changing their Hue and blending modes.

Cherry pick the best portraits from a series of group shots and mix them together to create a flattering group shot

of everyone. In our example we took several shots. The most flattering shot was ruined by the teenager's goofy expression. Luckily there's an easy way to add a not-so-goofy version of the uncouth youth to the family portrait.

Open your multiple shots and place them in a single document as a pile of layers. It's most likely you won't have used a tripod for your family photo, so each shot will be framed differently. You may even have tilted or rotated the camera slightly, causing the images to become misaligned. You'll need to align each layer so that the people and background objects are in a similar position. This will involve using the Move tool (V) to reposition layers. You may even need to use the Edit>Transform command to rotate some of the layers so they become more accurately aligned (see the tip below for help on aligning layers in CS2).

If you're one of the hundreds of thousands who've downloaded the beta of CS3, you have access to a much quicker way of aligning multiple layers. Simply hit Shift and select the layers in the Layers palette. They'll turn blue. Now go to Edit>Auto-Align Layers. A dialog box will open featuring a variety of alignment projection options. Tick Auto and press OK. CS3 will then analyse the shots and automatically move, rotate and even scale them so the figures and scenery become aligned. In our example the background furniture became perfectly aligned despite the camera being slightly rotated between shots.

Once your layers are aligned, you can place the best shot on the top of the layer stack. Grab the Eraser tool (E) and then spray over any less-than-perfect expressions to reveal better versions of the person from the layer beneath. As the layers are aligned, you should be able to use a soft edged Eraser brush to mix different layers together to create a perfect family portrait.

Numbers game

Get a bird's-eye view of your layers

When you are repositioning or rotating layers in order to align them (see the 'Pick and mix' question above), it's a big help to be able to see all of the layer content in the main work area. To make it easier for you to see each layer at the same time, reduce the Layer Opacity setting. You could target each layer thumbnail and drag the Opacity slider to the left, but a quicker way to do this is simply to press a number key. '1' will give your layer a 10% transparency and '9' will give you a 90% transparency. '0' will make the targeted layer 100% opaque.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Tool shortcuts

	PC	Mac
Toggle Standard/Quick Mask modes	Q	Q
Toggle Screen modes	F	F
Toggle Preserve Transparency	/	/
Decrease brush size	[	[

Take it to the bridge

Q I've not had a chance to explore CS3's beta, with all its new toys. I'm sure we'll hear all about them in future issues. What I want to know is, has Adobe Bridge become any more useful in CS3 or is it still a glorified file browser?
Angela Burton

A The latest version of Bridge has several cool new features, especially if you're into digital photography. One nifty little feature is the revamped Metadata window. If you select a thumbnail in the Content window you'll see an LCD-style icon that looks like a panel from the back of a digital camera. This panel displays useful info such as the shot's white balance, shutter speed and aperture settings, as well as the metering mode that the camera was set to when it captured the image.

See a shot's actual pixels without wasting time having to open it, thanks to Bridge CS3's Zoom tool

This may be a cosmetic enhancement, but it's a nice touch and saves you using the File Info option in Photoshop itself.

An even more useful addition to Bridge is the ability to see if an image is soft or not. It's difficult to see from a small thumbnail if a shot is truly sharp. In older versions of Bridge you need to open each file and zoom in to see if the shot is sharply focused. This process takes up valuable time, especially if you have dozens of shots to check. Now you can click on a thumbnail in Bridge's Preview pane and a magnifying glass icon will appear. Click on the preview and a magnifier window will pop up, showing you a small section of the photo at full size. You can drag this magnifier around the preview pane to check different parts of the image for focus problems without needing to open it. This will definitely speed up your workflow and make Bridge a far more useful asset management tool.

We're not going to review Bridge in this Q&A, but we'll finish by mentioning that CS3's Bridge has taken a leaf out of the Photoshop Elements Organizer. You can now stack piles of files on top of one another. This is an efficient way to store groups of similar shots, as they take up less space in Bridge's Content pane. You can even Onion Skin the stack to display all its shots as semi-transparent photos. Just right/Ctrl-click on a stack and pick Stack>Enable Onion Skin. These are some of the new touches that make Bridge worth a second look in CS3.

The final frontier

Q I need a quick way to create a Hubble telescope-style deep space shot.
Dan Montgomery

A For an instant result you'd do well to boldly go to **www.flamingpear.com** and download the demo of the Glitterato plug-in, designed to help you create stunning intergalactic vistas in minutes.

Drop it into your plug-ins folder, boot up Photoshop and go to Filter>Flaming Pear>Glitterato. Its interface will open, giving you an instant starscape packed with cloudy nebulae. You can tweak the scale and texture of gaseous nebulae with sliders, and alter the density and brightness of stars with ease. Given that the real Hubble telescope has blown a fuse, Glitterato and Photoshop might be our best bet when it comes to exploring the universe.

Thanks to Glitterato, we were able to bash out this starscape in a minute or so

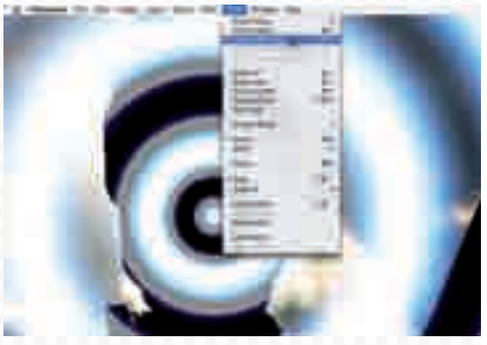
Book resources

You can never have enough Photoshop tips, and there's a new book that gives you 500 helpful nuggets of information. *500 Photoshop Hints, Tips and Techniques* by Mike Crawford is stuffed full of handy advice. Published by RotoVision, you can buy it for £16.99.

Colour control

Avoid unprintable colours

When you're experimenting with different layer blends and colourising your layers' content (see our Gradient walkthrough on page 76) you'll find that you can create some stunningly striking effects. These may look great on your monitor, but you could be in for a nasty surprise when you come to print the design. Not a lot of people know that your monitor can display more colours than your printer can print. Go to View>Gamut Warning. Now unprintable colours will appear as grey patches, enabling you to modify your edits and avoid trying to print out-of-gamut colours.



See the big picture

Quickly clean up your desktop

Sometimes you need lots of palettes open in order to do the job at hand, but all this clutter can get in the way of assessing your work. To quickly clear all of the palettes, simply hit the Tab key. You will now be left with just the open document and nothing else! To get your palettes back, just tap the Tab key again. They will return as normal.

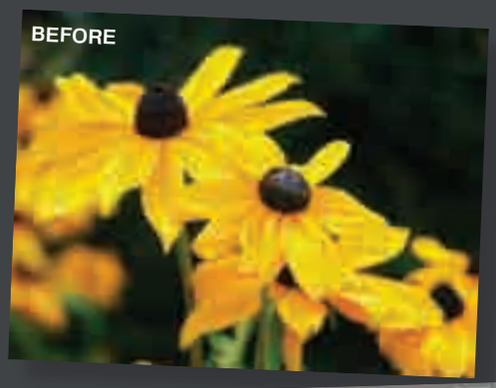
PHOTO FIX

Send in your troublesome images for us to fix…

Send your problematic photos on a CD to:

Photo Fix, *Photoshop Creative*, Imagine Publishing, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ

Unfortunately we cannot return CDs



Easy frame solutions

Photoshop Elements users have a fantastic range of frame effects for adding a finishing touch to photos

Presenting photos to their best advantage is the goal of any Photoshop user. Whether this involves tweaking the colours to make them pop or applying some filters to give an artistic effect, it's doubtful that the only thing you'll do to an image when opened in Photoshop is resave it with a different name!

Although it's intuitive to edit photos to give fantastic results, more often than not we forget about what can be done to perfect the presentation of the images. If you had a real photo that you wanted to display, you'd no doubt spend a fair bit of time searching for the perfect frame. You can do exactly the same with Photoshop Elements. Explore the Effects menu and you will find an interesting collection of frames that can show off your photo to its best advantage. We've shown our favourite ones below, but be sure to explore them yourself.

FRAME YOUR SUBJECT

Some of the best frame effects in Photoshop Elements

01 Photo Corners Applying a frame style is nice and easy. Open up your photo and then open the Styles and Effects palette. From the Effects pull-down menu, select Frames. These are your choices! Click on Photo Corners and then drag over to your image (this is how you apply frames). After a bit of moving, the frame will be applied.

02 Foreground Color For a more traditional effect, try the Foreground Color frame. As its name suggests, this uses the current foreground colour as the basis of a frame. It has a nice bevelled and drop shadow effect, and can really perk an image up. Stick with black or grey for most impact.

03 Recessed Frame With some of the frames you first need to make a selection, which allows you to control how thick they are. The Recessed Frame is one such option and gives a very subtle effect. Basically, a shadow is added to give a recessed effect, using the photo to make the actual frame.

Tool School

More frames for your buck

You don't have to make do with just one frame effect in Photoshop Elements. As long as you flatten your layers you can apply as many as you like, although we would suggest that anything over two is heading towards overkill!

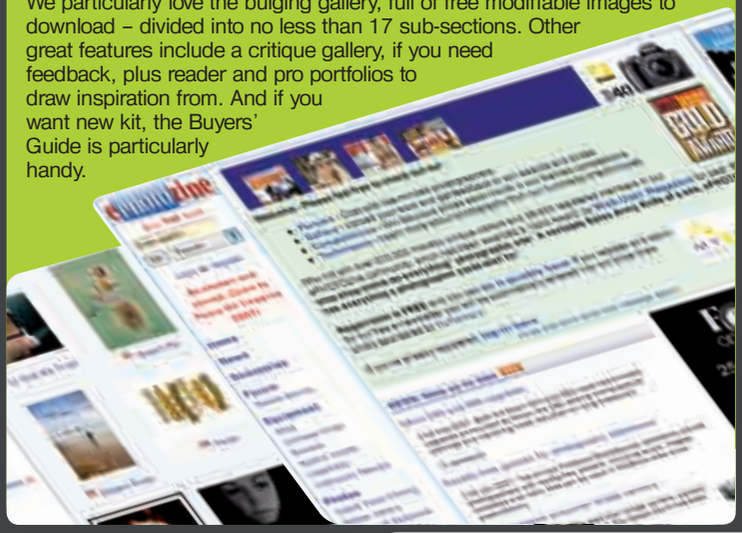
RESOURCES

Even more fantastic Photoshop goodies from the World Wide Web...

EPHOTOZINE

www.ephotozine.com

This is the kind of site that can have you occupied for hours. Primarily a resource for photographers, offering camera and software news, it branches off into image-editing tutorials too, with an extensive chapter of Photoshop and Elements-specific walk-throughs. We particularly love the bulging gallery, full of free modifiable images to download – divided into no less than 17 sub-sections. Other great features include a critique gallery, if you need feedback, plus reader and pro portfolios to draw inspiration from. And if you want new kit, the Buyers' Guide is particularly handy.



TUTORIAL TOMB

www.tutorialtomb.com

This great site is a great source of information for anyone who's looking for templates, free brushes and tutorials. As well as covering all the Photoshop necessities, it also offers HTML, pixel art and even MySpace tutorials too – perfect for all those multimedia junkies out there. There seems to be the recurring topic of space-inspired tutorials here, so if the galaxy gets you going then this is definitely the site for you.

DESIGN TAXI

www.designtaxi.com

A very trendy site that pools competitions, news and events. It has an impressive collection of reader portfolios and gives you the chance to upload your own work – perfect for aspiring designers to check out the competition and showcase their talents. There's a fantastic events diary, listing the hottest Photoshop and design-related happenings across the globe, and we love the extensive competition listing, sure to keep you competitive types occupied for months in advance.

KIRUPA

www.kirupa.com

Kirupa Chinnathambi has only just graduated, yet he's already written a book and has a thriving website under his belt. This friendly site has a great Photoshop section, crammed full of tutorials. Many of the step-by-steps are video-based, great for those who prefer learning by seeing rather than reading. There's a great community feel on the Kirupa forum, where you can pick up some good tricks and tips on all your Photoshop conundrums.

PHOTOSHOP SUPPORT.COM

www.photoshopsupport.com/tutorials/cs3-photoshop-10.html

With more and more people taking advantage of the Photoshop CS3 beta, it's to be expected that more and more online resources become available for it. One of the best places to come and find out about the latest and greatest is Photoshop Support.com. A fine site in its own right, it is also a handy starting point to discover what generous souls are sharing their Photoshop CS3 knowledge. You will see a list of the various sites, as well as direct links to the CS3 content. Well worth a visit to see what's new.

SIGSOURCE

www.sigsource.com

Thanks to its helpful online community, easy-to-follow tutorials and resources, Sigsource is perfect for Photoshop beginners. Aimed at amateurs, this site is a great tool if you want to develop your graphic art skills at a gentle pace. There are free stock photos, brushes and fonts available, plus loads of tutorials. The aim is to help people learn, grow and adapt their skills as a graphic artist, and build their confidence to take on bigger challenges as they progress.

eMag

creative reviews

Learn about a great camera for taking resource photos, discover more about a training DVD and see what the latest books to hit our shelves are

Main review

Olympus mju 750 82

Other review

Photoshop Elements for Digital Scrapbookers 84

Book reviews

Photoshop Effects for Portrait Photographers 86
Retro Graphics Cookbook 87
Digital Scrapbooking in Easy Steps 87
Preventive Photoshop 87

"Could this be the perfect camera for all-weather creatives?"

Olympus mju 750

HARDWARE

Olympus mju 750

Will this weatherproof wonder live up to expectations in the snapshot stakes?

Okay, so your comfort zone may be in front of a monitor in the confines of your home office, but there's no denying photography plays a huge role in any Photoshop user's work. Having a decent camera on hand wherever you go is a great way to build your archive of stock images and textures. Investing in your own compact not only cuts costs on stock imagery, but means you don't have to worry about copyright issues if you ever publish your work.

The Olympus mju 750 appears to be an ideal candidate for anyone looking for an easy-to-use, pocketable camera. Starting with the build and design, it certainly ticks all the right boxes. It only weighs 120 grams without the batteries, and its slim-line dimensions means it slips comfortably into a shirt or trouser pocket.

If you plan to take this camera everywhere you go, you'll be pleased to hear it's extremely robust. For added peace of mind, it features a weatherproof metal body with special seals designed to keep rain and splashes out of the heart of the camera.

The design is pretty inoffensive, boasting an all-silver metal body which narrows at one end. This actually makes it pretty comfortable to hold, although if you have very large hands it may be a little fiddly. The back of the mju 750 sports a 2.5-inch monitor, for decent viewing capabilities. It's worth noting there's no separate viewfinder, although these days, very few compacts have them as standard.

This camera's specs are pretty substantial considering the very reasonable price point.

info

COMPANY
Olympus

WEB
www.olympus.co.uk

PRICE (SRP)
£280

MEGAPIXELS
7.1

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK...

What's so magnificent about the mju?

The Olympus mju 750 has much to recommend it…

Connections
Link your camera to your computer, printer or TV by using the USB/AV connection port. The hub is sealed with a rubber-lined compartment door.

Card and battery
The mju uses a lithium-ion rechargeable battery, which shares a compartment with the memory card. All Olympus cameras take xD-Picture cards.

Four-way controller
We like the tidy layout of the controls, with the four-way controller surrounded by the remaining camera buttons. The menu is accessed from here.

It offers 7.1 megapixels, which is a decent enough resolution to produce A3 images very comfortably without sacrificing detail and sharpness. It also has a 5x optical zoom, giving you a very respectable magnification of distant subjects. At maximum zoom, the lens only protrudes about 3.5cm, maintaining its neat and tidy dimensions.

Delving into the depths of the camera, there are a host of scene modes for almost every shooting situation imaginable. Within the 23 modes we counted, we discovered some gems that included 'Behind Glass', which takes the hassle out of those awkward reflective surfaces. The 'Auction' mode is handy if you're a regular eBayer or fan of other online auction sites. These scene modes make photography really easy, so if you don't consider yourself much of a camera whiz, simply turn the dial to the mode that best suits the scene before you and snap away.

Each scene mode is accompanied by an example photo to make your choice even easier. Another amateur-pleasing feature is the 'Guide' mode, also found on the shooting dial – an extensive camera guide offering excellent advice on how to get the best images. There are 13 helpful topics to browse through.

The button layout is neat and tidy, with the four-way controller surrounded by additional functions to form a square. The shooting dial is above that and the zoom rocker sits at the top of the stack. We did find the zoom a little too close to the shooting dial, and could have done with a little more space dividing the two.

The shooting benefits of this camera include the Image Stabilizer function, enabling you to shoot handheld, limiting the effect of camera shake. The Macro mode is particularly useful for capturing some great textures and backgrounds for your Photoshop projects. One press of the Macro button on the four-way controller opens up the Macro options – Macro Off, Macro On, Super Macro On. The Super Macro is fantastic, enabling you to shoot from as close as 3cm to your subject.

Image quality is very reasonable, with good true-to-life colour reproduction. Those who aren't overly confident with their photography skills will find this camera a breeze to achieve decent images, especially using the ample choice of scene modes and image stabilisation option. Sharpness is good and there is a nice balance in the dynamic range of the images.

Obviously this camera is a compact aimed at amateur s, and enthusiasts are advised to go for something more substantial in terms of control. But if you just want a reliable, good-looking camera, you can't go wrong with the mju 750.

SMART CHOICE

The Olympus mju 750 is a very user-friendly model, aimed at the amateur end of the photography market. It has a simple layout and menu interface for easy operation

Shooting dial This dial is the access point to your Playback screen, handy information guide as well as the Movie mode. Twist it to the camera icon to shoot normally, or select SCN to choose a scene mode.

Large LCD This bright LCD measures 2.5 inches, giving you a decent viewing window. It copes well in most conditions, although like most cameras, it struggles a little in bright sunlight.

"THE MACRO MODE IS PARTICULARLY USEFUL FOR CAPTURING SOME GREAT TEXTURES AND BACKGROUNDS FOR YOUR PHOTOSHOP PROJECTS"

Test shot – max zoom
The 5x optical zoom gets you up close to the action, while maintaining sharpness and detail within the image.

Test shot – wide angle
Not the most impressive wide angle to be featured on a camera, but the mju does the trick and offers a good spread at the widest end of its focal length.

Test shot – Macro
Build up your library of backgrounds, textures and patterns using the Macro or Super Macro mode. They get you amazingly close to your subject.

PROS

- Super Macro mode
- Weatherproof casing
- True-to-life colours
- Very easy to use

CONS

- No manual functions
- A bit fiddly for bigger hands

VERDICT

8.0

Perfect to always have in your pocket for capturing those photo moments. It's good-looking, compact and captures great-quality images

PRODUCTS

Tune up your scrapbooking skills with a little help from this tutorial-based DVD

Photoshop Elements for Digital Scrapbookers

info

COMPANY
KW Media group

WEB
www.photoshopvideos.com

PRICE
£28.99

OPERATING SYSTEMS
PC and Mac

If you're new to Elements or simply need a bit of guidance, the *Photoshop Elements for Digital Scrapbookers* DVD will be very useful. Digital scrapbooking essentially means collating images, graphics and other bits of info to create collages of ideas or themes. This DVD gives you a host of tutorials on creating a personalised scrapbook from start to finish. Comprising of five main chapters, it covers a wide range of techniques to impress any aspiring digital artist.

The Special Effects chapter includes lessons on torn edges, puzzle pieces and filmstrips – all skills that can be applied to Photoshop projects outside the realms of scrapbooking. You can pick and choose which effects you want to know about, and one click of the mouse will play that section. The Texture and Patterns chapter includes some handy tutorials on producing realistic backgrounds.

Your host is Photoshop guru, Matt Kloskowski, whose chatty manner makes the tutorials really easy to follow. Pleasingly, they are unscripted so there are no stilted jargon-filled speeches. Instead, Kloskowski's relaxed approach makes the step-by-steps feel very achievable. The intro and final comments are a tiny bit cheesy, with Matt appearing on the DVD in person, but this is the DVD's only downfall – and it's a minor one at that. The actual on-screen tutorials look very professional and are extremely helpful.

The overall layout quality is of a decent standard. You won't be buying into a flashy package – this is aimed at beginners and the interface reflects that. It's plain and simple, which certainly works for us. Elements users will be thankful for the well-defined chapters, the ability to apply the methods to both Elements 3 and 4, plus the choice of subject matter.

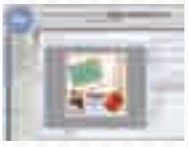
This DVD serves its purpose beautifully, making the scrapbooking process quick and easy. It's a great tool to have running alongside your open application in order to give you the confidence to produce inspiring projects.

SO WHAT'S ON THE DVD?

Find out why we like it so much

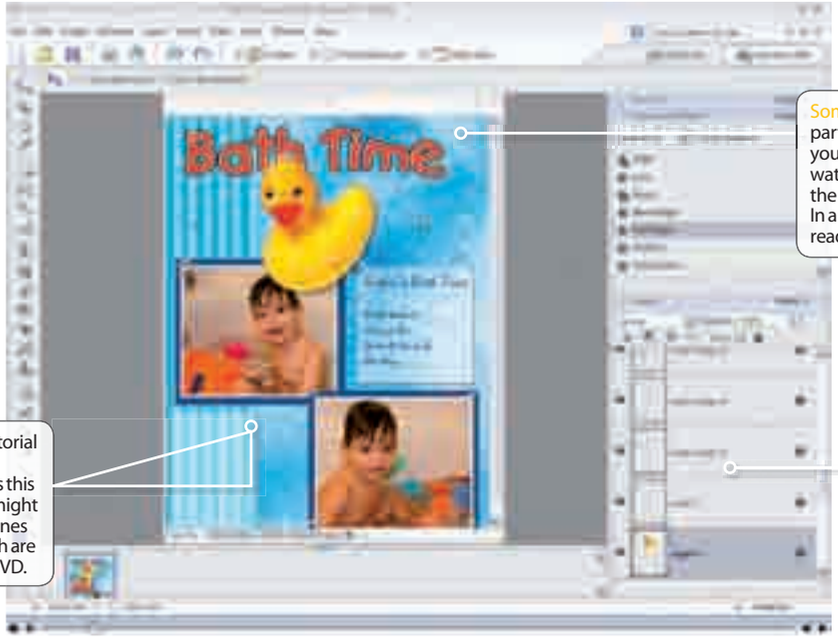
Bits and bobs There are some useful tutorials for creating handy scrapbook embellishments such as paper clips and chains.

Photo Effects There are also four photo effects on the disc, including vintage effects and photo borders.



Special Effects This section gives techniques you can use in a variety of ways. We especially liked the Chalk Brush demo.

Type Effects There's a chapter dedicated to text, and one tutorial shows how to create photo-filled type.



Accessible chapters The chapters are usually listed on the left-hand side of the page. Once you click on a chapter, the sub-sections appear on the centre screen.

Something in the water This particular tutorial teaches you how to produce this water effect using filters and the hue and saturation tools. In a few easy steps you are ready to try it for yourself.

Layers This tutorial is shown in real-time, so the layers build up exactly as they would if you were creating this image for yourself. Each individual layer is shown to illustrate how the image is created.

Bright examples Each tutorial is based around a bright achievable image such as this one. It's something you might try yourself, plus it combines a number of effects which are taught throughout the DVD.

PROS

- Very informal and chatty
- The tutorials can be used with both Elements 3 and Elements 4
- Step-by-step format easy to follow

CONS

- It's a little cheesy

VERDICT

8.0

Really good method to use if you want to familiarise yourself with Elements. The tutorials have a relaxed pace and are very easy to follow

eMag

BOOKS

Photoshop Effects for Portrait Photographers

Become a people person and discover the art of portrait perfection

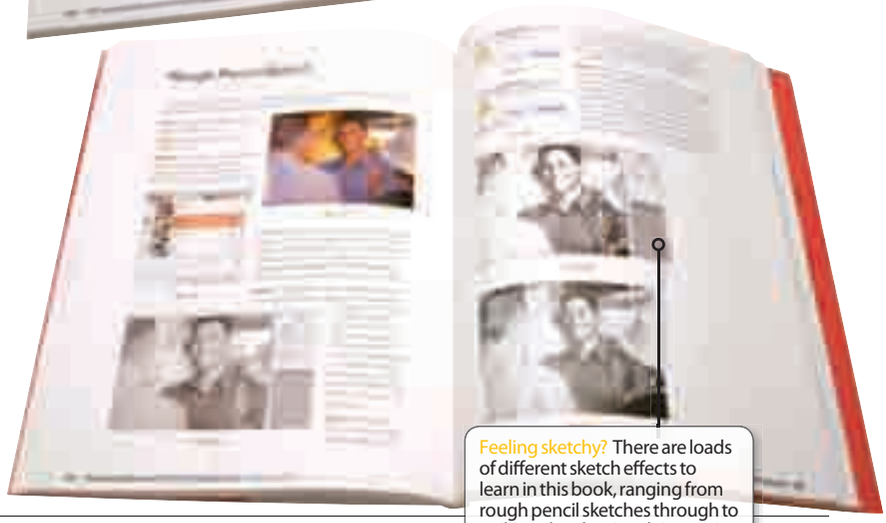
This book is a great tool whether you're a whiz with a camera or not. People are never satisfied when you take their photo and often moan about their blemishes, red-eye or lack of a tan, which is where *Photoshop Effects for Portrait Photographers* comes in. It explores a range of Photoshop techniques, covering everything from image enhancements to imitating specific photographic techniques used within the portraiture genre.

It has a great down-to-earth approach, without a patronising tone in sight. The author and self-confessed 'Photoshop geek boy' (his words) keeps things simple, omitting all the unnecessary 'Click OK' commands so often littered throughout tutorial-based books.

All the first-state images in the book are available from the author's site, so you can follow the steps to the letter. We particularly love the 'Hollywood eyes' effect so often seen in magazine retouching, enabling you to bring glamour to an ordinary shot. The Artistic Effects section is a gem too, offering a multitude of styles from kitsch silkscreen demos to luxurious oil chalk tutorials.

If people are your thing and you prefer a no-fuss approach to tutorials, this book will keep you occupied with a host of projects.

Get oiled up For a really smooth finish, applying an Oil Chalk effect can give your image a feel of luxury. This book shows you how it's done in just eight easy steps.



Feeling sketchy? There are loads of different sketch effects to learn in this book, ranging from rough pencil sketches through to striking sketches involving grain.

info

AUTHOR
Christopher Grey

PRICE
£17.99

PUBLISHER
Focal Press

ISBN
0-240-80-894-0

CREATING THE PERFECT PORTRAIT

You don't have to be a pro photographer to achieve a perfect shot

Multiple choice *Photoshop Effects for Portrait Photographers* has more than 30 handy tutorials to get your creative juices flowing.

Colour crazy There are some great tips on how to bring black-and-white images to life using just a splash of colour.

Photographic effects Create effects such as shortening the focus simply by following the straightforward, no-fuss steps.

Every base covered The book spans almost every type of portraiture, from Fifties-style pin-ups to classic vignette family portraits.

Speedy effects Many of the tutorials enable you to complete dramatic transformations within as little as six steps.

NOTES | LET US KNOW IF THERE'S A TYPE OF PHOTOSHOP BOOK YOU'D LIKE US TO REVIEW – JUST EMAIL PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

Retro Graphics Cookbook

Take a nostalgic look at the history of graphic design and pick up some handy tips along the way

info

AUTHORS
Jonathan Raimes & Lakshmi Bhaskaran

PRICE
£17.99

PUBLISHER
ILEX

ISBN
1904705979

The history of design is very colourful, which is what makes this book so addictive. We're always looking for fresh inspiration, but instead of looking to futuristic, space-inspired scenes, it's refreshing to reminisce about designs that have played a part in history.

Retro Graphics is a great source of design ideas, font styles and colour palettes from design eras of the last 120 years. Documenting the distinctive style of Art Deco, the psychedelic influences of the Sixties and the punk-inspired posters of the Eighties, there's something for everyone.

As well as an overview on each design style, there's a simple step-by-step on how to replicate the look. If you like all your info in one quick hit, you'll find the layout spot on.

Font fantastic In order to re-create a style from a particular era effectively, each project includes an example of modern-day fonts which are suitable for producing that kind of look.

GOING OLD-SKOOL

History lessons have never been so much fun!

Colour coaching A palette of colours used in the style is on view so you can customise your own to create a similar image.

Step-by-steps The tutorials are based on Photoshop and Illustrator software, giving you easy, work-through steps.

All areas covered The book looks at graphic styles from the 1880s to the 1990s, covering every design base.

Images with impact There is plenty of inspiration, with whole pages dedicated to some images.

Digital Scrapbooking in Easy Steps

Take your editing skills back to basics with the help of this simple reference book

info

AUTHOR
John Slater

PRICE
£10.99

PUBLISHER
In easy steps

ISBN
1-84078-303-6

If you're new to the editing game and you want to start at the very beginning, then *Digital Scrapbooking* is your perfect companion.

When you're starting out in the world of Photoshop, the last thing you want is to be bombarded with technical jargon and complicated computer speak. This easy-to-use book concentrates on easing even the most apprehensive user into the realms of image editing, using clear terms and instructions at a very gentle pace.

The book begins by explaining the workspace and introducing key concepts such as layers and the Undo History palette. By sticking to a very simple format of minimal text and going large on illustrations and images, *Digital Scrapbooking* does its very best to make the process as straightforward as possible.

Many of the projects are craft-based rather than design-related, so those looking to produce digital art may not be too taken with what's on offer here. However, if you want to understand Photoshop from a beginner level, this book is an ideal reference to get you started.

Preventive Photoshop

All the help you're ever going to need to get it right once and for all...

info

AUTHOR
Douglas Ford Rea

PRICE
£28.99

PUBLISHER
Peachpit Press

ISBN
0321410963

If you spend too much time correcting images rather than getting creative with them, maybe you should look closely at your photography skills. *Preventive Photoshop* looks at capturing decent images in the first place, giving you more time for the fun part of image editing. A large portion of the book concentrates on the fundamentals of image capture, looking at exposure and lighting.

Helpfully, there's a section on processing RAW images, explaining why they're so beneficial. In fact, it's jam-packed with info to make your workflow run a lot smoother.

Be warned, this book is not for the technophobe. The extensive info on both camera and colour profiling may be a little heavy-going for some, but if you bear with it the rewards are certainly worthwhile. This is a practical resource for those who want to use Photoshop to its full potential.

Exhibit

Welcome to the pages of the magazine where we hand control over to entries for previous Readers' Challenges. Are you featured this time?

You may roll your eyes when we say it, but each time we get another collection of your challenge images through the post or via email, we stop what we're doing and rush to see what creations you have come up with.

It's almost become a bit of a ritual – each morning we get our coffees and then sift through the entries to see what's there. And we have to say, it's getting harder and harder to decide on only one winner. Maybe we'd better start having multiple winning titles! So what do we have on offer this issue?

There were a few dramatic entries, where the focus was very much on creating a powerful atmosphere. Our winner is a perfect example of this, but so is Attila Varga's moonlit building and Simon Evans' pier creation. It was also nice to see some faery-inspired artwork, specifically Heather Nicholson's woodland faery and Kym Garland's more contemporary approach.

Ann Martin looked like she had some real fun with her fossilised creation and we loved Nik Morgan's paint-tube/racing car hybrid!

But a big well done to everyone who entered – whether you're featured here or not!

WIN! ADOBE PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 5.0

Get your work featured

If you'd like to share your work with others, send your pictures in to us and you could be featured on these pages. Just pop your images onto a CD and send it to:

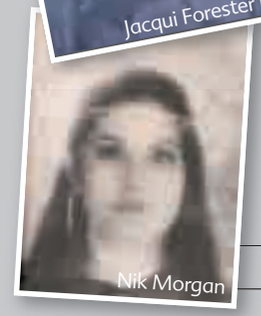
Exhibit, *Photoshop Creative*, Imagine Publishing, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ, UK

Alas, we can't return any CDs.
If your entry is under 2MB, you can email it to **PCR@imagine-publishing.co.uk**

Near winners

Gareth Cowlin

Linda Feeney



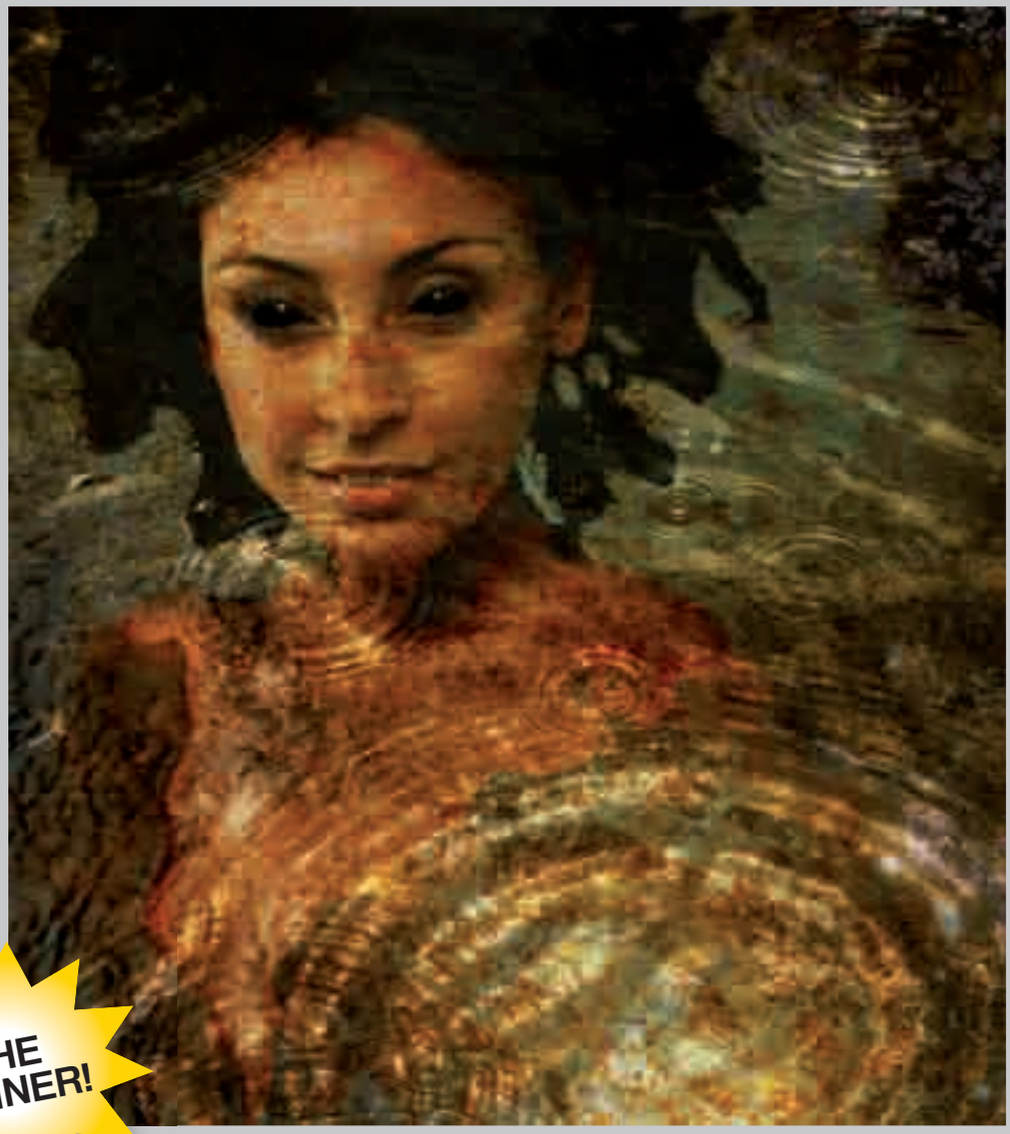
Juli Tetiarahi

Lady of the Water

"This was my second try with Photoshop. I blended photos of a pebbled stream and water drop ripples for the background. With the woman, I used the Liquify tool around the edges and brushed in her siren eyes."

Why it's a winner!

Considering this was only Juli's second try with Photoshop, we were amazed at the detail and effect she managed to achieve. The water ripples look wonderful and make for a really interesting addition – it's something we'll try from now on! The colours work well together and give the feeling that the lady is a mythical being from the depths of the water. This is enhanced by the fact that her eyes are so unusual – all-in-all a fabulous entry!



THE WINNER!

Kym Garland (above)

Untitled

Kym didn't send us any information about the creation of the image, but we love the textured, contemporary feel and the suggestion of faery wings.

Attila Varga (left)

Dark Castle

"The clouds on the background are burned, the saturation is low. The building is reconstructed – I made taller towers, skulls, etc…"

Heather Nicholson (far left)

Woodland Fairy

"A simple image from a background, model and wings. Buzz Simplifier was used and a border added."

Exhibit

Chris Vincent (above)

28 Layer Nightmare

"I started with the girl and the flowers, but then added layers until it turned into a '28 layer nightmare'."

Ann Martin (top)

Frozen Zebradon

"Zebradon frozen during the Ice Age can be seen rising from the murky waters with the onset of global warming. Mezzo Force in Photoshop was used to produce the frozen waste."

Nik Morgan (above)

Go Faster Paint

"I took a photo of a tube of paint from my daughter's paint set. I used brushes to make the paint and added a bit of bevel and shadow. The car and tube were given a colour pencil filter."

Adelita Marais (left)

Untitled

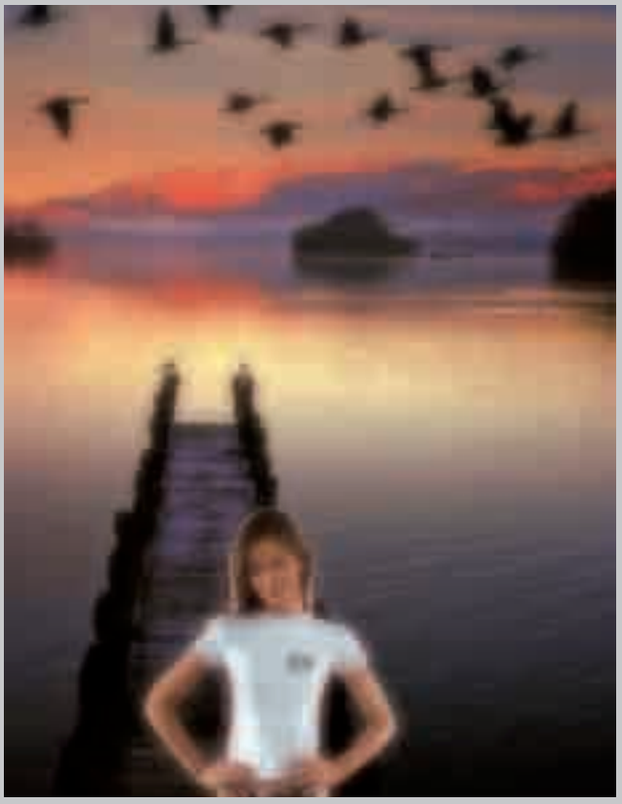
"I thought I would enter the challenge and show my idea. We in South Africa receive the magazines later so my picture is a bit late, but I still hope it will receive a positive response."

Turn to page 98 and enter this issue's Readers' Challenge

Antonio Carlos Espilotro

Untitled

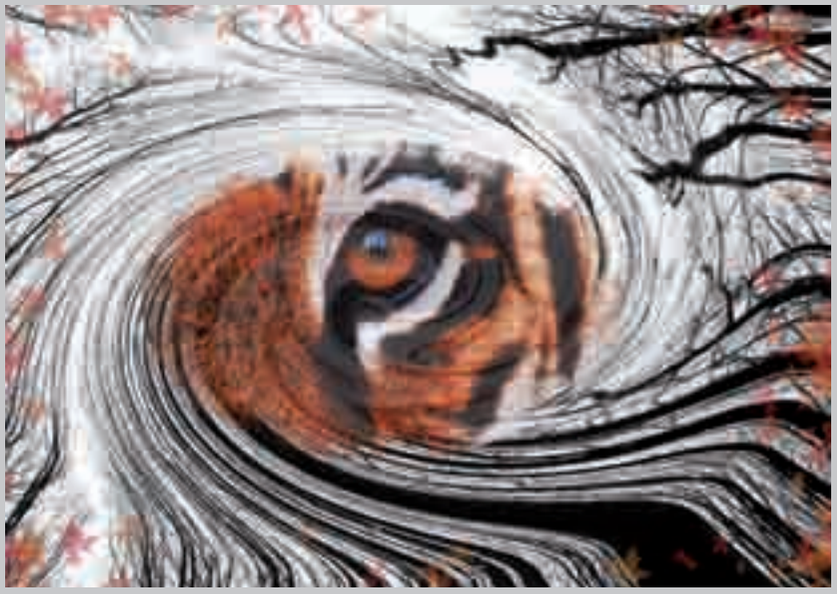
Antonio didn't provide any information with his image, apart from the fact it was done in Photoshop CS2. Very nice it is as well!



Simon Evans

Untitled

"Here's my entry for the competition. It's been fun for me, as I have bought your magazine religiously since issue one, yet this is the first time I have had a go at anything."



Jacqui Forester

Tiger Woods

"I took the trees photo and distorted it to give an oval spiral shape, then I took a tiger photo, and selected the eye area which I blended into the swirl of the trees. Finally, I painted in some leaves."

WIN! ADOBE PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 5.0

Enter our challenge and see your work in the magazine!

Readers' Challenge

Work up a creative appetite and then feed your imagination on this challenge!

Sometimes a bit of healthy competition can do the creative mind a world of good. Which is why we've set up this regular challenge for you to have a go at. All you need to do is download the challenge images then work out a way of using them creatively. Let your hair down and have some fun – all we ask is that you use at least one of them.

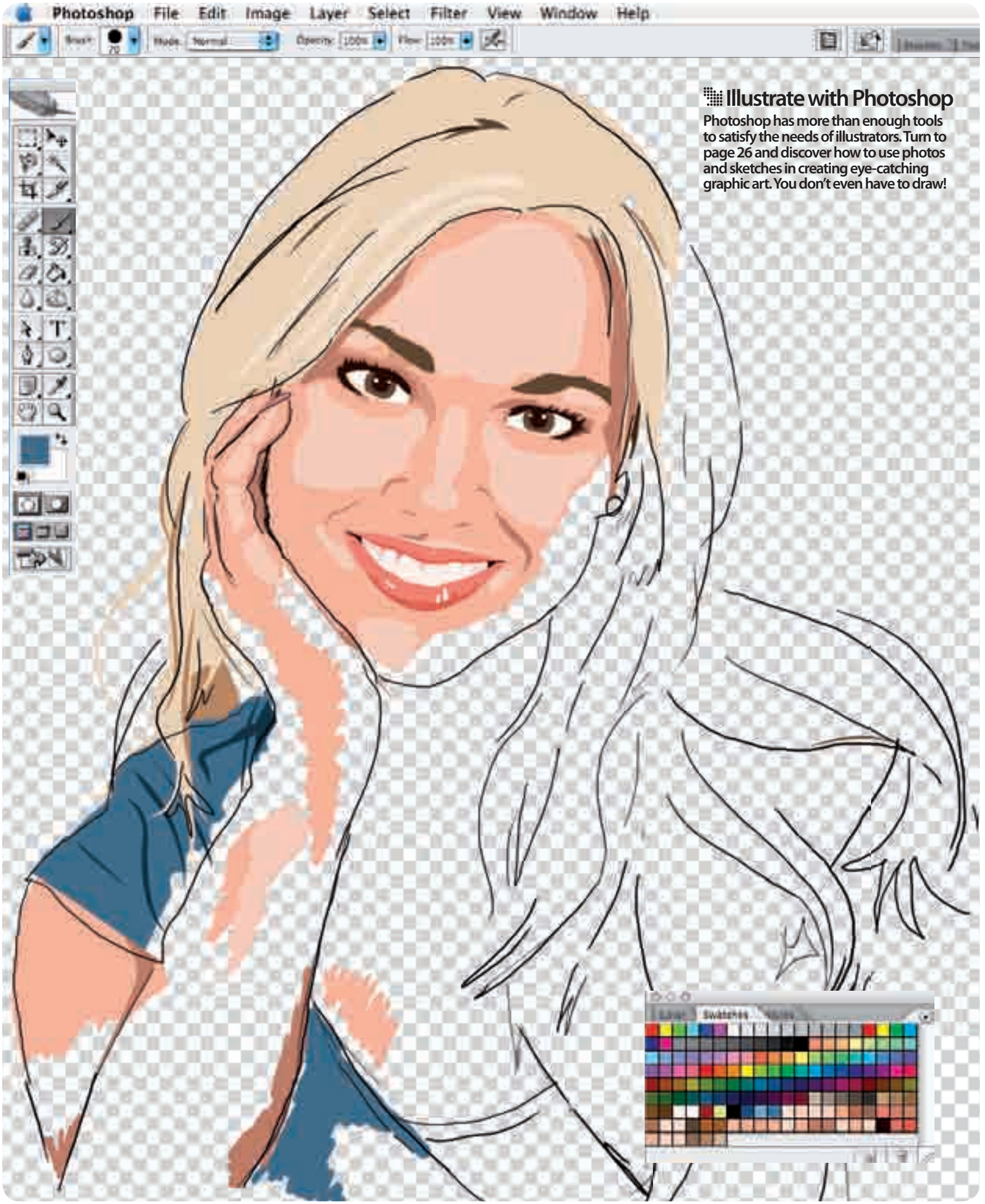
Don't worry if you've just got started with Photoshop or you aren't confident in your skills. The point of this challenge is to see how people interpret an open brief, and no one is here to judge. There are no minimum skill requirements, so everyone is welcome to enter, whether they've been using Photoshop for ten years or ten minutes. There isn't a deadline either, so you can enter whenever you get the magazine or whenever you think up something to create!

HOW TO ENTER

Access the Readers' Challenge folder from the side panel on our CD and copy it to your desktop. Once you've completed your masterpiece, send it to us on a CD along with your name, address and a few words about your creation, to:

Readers' Challenge
Photoshop Creative
Imagine Publishing
Richmond House
33 Richmond Hill
Bournemouth
Dorset, UK
BH2 6EZ

NOTES | IF YOUR ENTRY IS UNDER 2MB, YOU CAN EMAIL IT TO US AT **PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK**. UNFORTUNATELY WE CAN'T RETURN CDS



Illustrate with Photoshop

Photoshop has more than enough tools to satisfy the needs of illustrators. Turn to page 26 and discover how to use photos and sketches in creating eye-catching graphic art. You don't even have to draw!